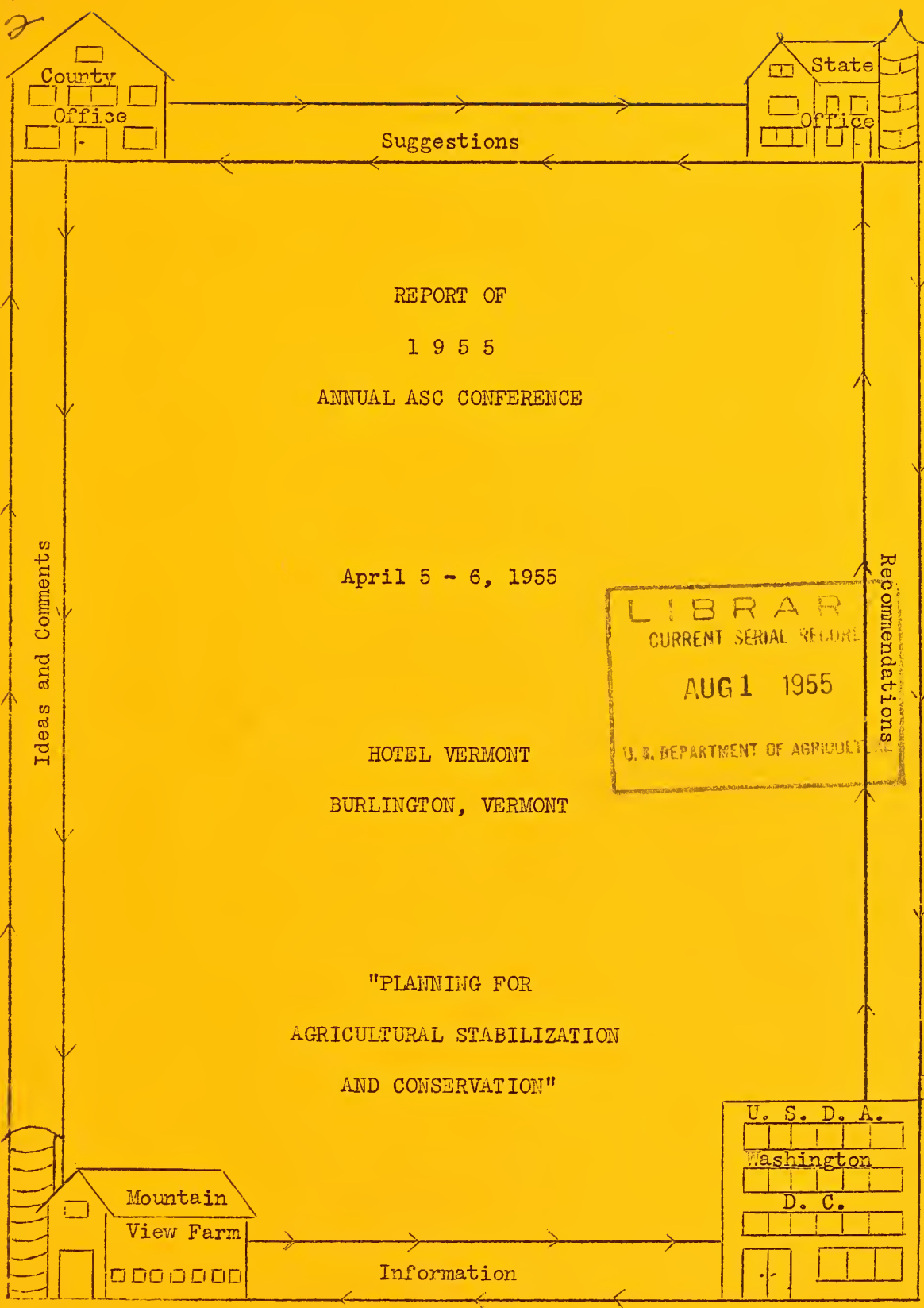


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## REPORT OF ANNUAL ASC CONFERENCE

Vermont State and County Committeemen, County Office Managers,  
County Agents, and Guests

Held at Hotel Vermont, Burlington, Vermont, April 5 - 6, 1955

### Foreword

This report presents the principal talks and committee reports of the 1955 Annual ASC Conference. The two-day conference brought together, through its three committees, the farmer thinking and recommendations which will form the groundwork for the months ahead in the program of work of the Vermont Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Office.

The recommendations included in the report are as they were approved by the entire conference. These recommendations will be later reviewed and considered by the Vermont State ASC Committee.

We were pleased and felt honored that Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz could be with us. Other honored guests included Senator George D. Aiken and Governor and Mrs. Joseph B. Johnson.

We greatly appreciate the efforts and wholehearted cooperation of all who helped in any way in contributing to the success of our 1955 ASC Conference.

### State Committee

Hugh E. Evans, Chairman  
James W. Williams, Vice Chairman  
B. Frank Myott, Member

### State Office

A. F. Heald, Administrative Officer  
E. N. Blondin, Fieldman  
C. D. Doane, Fieldman

CONFERENCE THEME

Planning for

Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation

We are proud of the "20 Years of Soil Building in Vermont" which our ACP has helped bring about.

We should keep in mind, throughout our conference, ways and means of "Planning for Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation."

We should try to develop an Agricultural Conservation Program that is sound for Vermont and for the Nation.

We must strive to make our State, county, and community committeemen effective in administering the programs assigned to them.

Let's all resolve to do an outstanding job in 1956.

## PROGRAM

### Vermont ASC Annual Conference

April 5 - 6, 1955

Hotel Vermont, Burlington, Vermont

#### Program - April 5

9:00 a.m. Register, get name tags and banquet tickets  
to  
10:00 a.m. at Conference Registration Desk in Lobby.

#### Conference Opened by James Williams, Presiding

10:00 a.m.	Plans and Purpose of Meeting Introduction of Visitors and Delegates	Hugh E. Evans, Chairman, State ASC Committee
10:15 a.m.	Use of the ACP on Our Vermont Farms	Winston Way Agronomist, UVM
11:00 a.m.	The Department's Policy Re ACP	Ernest Gambell, Staff Asst. to Administrator, ACPS
12:00 noon	Lunch	

#### Hugh Evans, Presiding

1:15 p.m.	Plans for State Committee Nominations	James W. Williams State ASC Committeeman
1:30 p.m.	Conference Committee Assignments	
	A. Program Planning Committee	
	B. ACP Program Operations Committee	
	C. Administrative Problems and Related Activities Committee	
1:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	Conference Committee Meetings	

CONFERENCE BANQUET

April 5, 1955

6:30 p.m. --- Main Dining Room

Toastmaster --- L. Earl Wilson  
State Committee Alumnus

PROGRAM

Accordion Solos

Dick Mercure

Awards

Food, Fibre and The Future

Earl Butz  
Assistant Secretary  
of Agriculture

Whistling

Earl Bartlett

Honored Guests

Senator George D. Aiken

Governor and Mrs. Joseph R. Johnson

State and County Committee Alumni



Program - April 6

B. Frank Myott, Presiding

9:00 a.m.	Farm Labor and the Draft Laws	
	Discussion led by	A. F. Heald, State Administrative Officer
	State Draft Laws	Merton Ashton, Deputy Director, Selective Service System
	Farm Labor	Merrill Walker, State Farm Placement Supv., Employment Service
	Discussion	
10:00 a.m.	Suggestions from Our Co-Workers	
	Discussion led by	Hugh E. Evans, Chairman State ASC Committee
	Soil Conservation Service	L. J. Peet, State Conservationist, SCS
	Extension Service	R. P. Davison, County Agent Leader
	Forest Service	Paul Newcomb, U. S. Forest Service, and Perry Merrill, Vermont Forest Service
	Farmers Home Administration	Cloyes T. Gleason, State Field Representative
	Soil Conservation Districts	Willard Arms, President, SCD Supervisors
11:15 a.m.	Current Events in CSS	Harris W. Soule, (NE) Area Director
12:00 noon	Lunch	

Program - April 6

Hugh Evans, Presiding

1:15 p.m.	Report of Committee on Program Planning	James W. Williams State ASC Committeeman
	Discussion - Changes - Adoption	
	Report of Committee on ACP Program Operations	B. Frank Hyott State ASC Committeeman
	Discussion - Changes - Adoption	
	Report of Committee on Administrative Problems and Related Activities	Hugh E. Evans, Chairman State ASC Committee
	Discussion - Changes - Adoption	
3:00 p.m.	Nominations for State Committee	James W. Williams State ASC Committeeman
3:30 p.m.	Closing Remarks	A. F. Heald, State Administrative Officer
3:45 p.m.	Adjourn	

Conference Committee Assignments

I. PROGRAM PLANNING COMMITTEE

James W. Williams, Chairman

Edson Gifford, Vice Chairman

Almon F. Heald, Secretary

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>COUNTY COMMITTEEMEN</u>	<u>COUNTY AGENTS</u>
Addison	Robert Highter	Lucien Paquette or John Stephenson
Bennington	Clyde Bryant	
Caledonia	Donald Larocque	
Chittenden	Ray Collins	Robert L. Carlson
Essex	Ray French	
Franklin	Stuart Newton	
Grand Isle	George Caswell	Robert E. White
Lamoille	Ray Perkins	
Orange	Edson Gifford	
Orleans	Clyde Vance	Roger Whitcomb
Rutland	James Brayton	
Washington	Everett Walbridge	
Windham	Myron Allen	Ray Pestle
Windsor	Lloyd Jewett	

II. ACP PROGRAM OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

B. Frank Myott, Chairman

Charles Winslow, Vice Chairman

Charles B. Doane, Secretary

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>COUNTY COMMITTEEMEN</u>	<u>COUNTY OFFICE MANAGERS</u>	<u>COUNTY AGENTS</u>
Addison	Sedgewick Preston		
Bennington	E. W. Mattison	John J. DeVito	John Page
Caledonia	Arthur Messier		
Chittenden	Raymond Rowley	Dorothy Howard	
Essex	Fritz Farmer		Earle Clark
Franklin	Floyd Weld	Avis Bronson	
Grand Isle	Alan Kinney		
Lamoille	Howard Kittell	Hazel Hoyt	Silas Jewett
Orange	Walter Wheatley		
Orleans	Eldon Lucier	Patricia Walsh	
Rutland	Charles Winslow		William Corey
Washington	D. Drew Bisbee	Marjorie Leith	
Windham	Robert Gaines		
Windsor	Ruel Abbott	Betty Dutton	William Stone

III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS AND RELATED ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Hugh E. Evans, Chairman

Norman Lowe, Vice Chairman

Edward N. Blondin, Secretary

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>COUNTY COMMITTEEMEN</u>	<u>COUNTY OFFICE MANAGERS</u>	<u>COUNTY AGENTS</u>
Addison	Howard A. Foster	Edla Browne	
Bennington	Ball L. Lyons		
Caledonia	Norman Lowe	Mildred Murphy	Philip Grime
Chittenden	Carlyle Taft		
Essex	C. E. Wright	Mildred Bell	
Franklin	Reginald Nichols		R. C. McWilliams
Grand Isle	Jay Haylett	Grace Blackwell	
Lamoille	Arthur Stancliff		
Orange	F. Milo Leighton	Louise Rand	Gordon Farr
Orleans	Robert P. Kilborn		
Rutland	Roy Burroughs	Bethany French	
Washington	W. J. Bisson		Gordon Butler
Windham	Claude Bensenhaver	Mae Carpenter	
Windsor	Matthew Watson		



## PLANS AND PURPOSE OF MEETING

Introduction of Visitors and Delegates  
by

Hugh E. Evans, Chairman, Vermont State ASC Committee  
at the  
Annual Conference, Hotel Vermont  
Burlington, Vermont -- April 5, 1955

I am glad of this opportunity to outline to you folks the plans and purpose of our 1955 Annual ASC Conference.

As our program points out we are meeting to discuss "Planning for Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation." This is the 20th year of the State Committee set-up in Vermont. Today and tomorrow we will be planning our 21st Agricultural Conservation Program.

As I see our aims and purposes at this annual conference we should very carefully review the work given to us as State, county and community committeemen. We should take a look at what has been done and should try to improve the way we carry out our assignments in the future.

I have been a farmer-committeeman working with this program for many years. I am proud of our accomplishments and hope you are. I believe this farmer-committee system is sound and can operate effectively.

A few words to our working committees.

### For you who are serving on the Program Planning Committee

I hope that you will take a good look at some of the changes that have been brought about during the last few years. Give a lot of weight to the recommendations your community committeemen have made and above all come up with a program that you think will be sound and will work in Vermont.

### A few words to the ACP Program Operations Committee group

You have an important job. I hope you will analyze carefully our State, county and community committee system and recommend ways and means that it can operate the program more efficiently.

### Administrative Problems Committee

You should take a good look at the way our county offices are being run. Analyze our election procedure; county committee meetings; and do not hesitate to come out with suggestions on how to improve the administrative work at the county level. You should also take a good look at other assignments given us such as CCC activities, including the Wool Program. Make recommendations on ways and means of keeping our committeemen better informed on these programs.

### Conclusion

In conclusion as we continue on through these two days of conference give us the best ideas you have and our program is sure to be a success.

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## USE OF ACP ON OUR VERMONT FARMS

Address by Winston Way, Agronomist, University of Vermont  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 5, 1955

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to a group which has done so much good for Vermont agriculture and indirectly all of the people in the State. I am sure that you are all interested in continuing this work and are perhaps looking for new ideas for doing it. I would like to be pessimistic and say that any ideas which you discover will be in techniques and methods of carrying on your present program. Agronomically speaking, "More of the same" should be your goal.

A look at the past is always well before studying the present or looking at the future. Unfortunately, I am not well qualified to be a historian. Experience is one course which seems to be neglected in a college education. Let's look at the "Good old days" from the agronomic point of view -- Way back at the time land was cleared, Vermont was covered with forest which was ideal for the conservation of soil. Nature was pretty much in balance except for an occasional fire or other natural catastrophe. Nutrients needed by vegetation were provided by the soil as well as decaying plant and animal matter. Water was quite well controlled by the spongy organic layers on the forest floor and leaching was probably less serious than it is today.

With such a picture in mind many people imagine that the soil was exceedingly fertile and capable of growing any crop. This was not the case. The pH value of these soils ranged from 3.5 to 5.5. Phosphorus supplies were low because the rock materials contained little. Potash and calcium were also low. The recycling of nutrients was responsible for most growth.

Early settlers used a policy of "clear, cut and burn" which liberated the minerals for crops of corn, beans, etc. Nitrogen was released by the action of heat (sunlight) and the cultivation which admitted more air to the soil. Such a system of agriculture is bound to be short-lived and was. The soil deteriorated chemically, physically and biologically.

In more recent times, say 50 years ago, our agriculture was working with the same old soil. It has been improved some by manure, grass and a small amount of commercial fertilizer. Acidity was still a handicap. About 2000 tons of lime were used annually along with perhaps 10-15,000 tons of commercial fertilizer. 2-8-2 was one of the grades available which persisted until 1932.

"In 1900, 20,000 out of 32,000 farms used fertilizer. They spent \$22 per farm or 34¢ per improved acre." This was double 1890 reports. Timothy, redtop, and alsike produced 1.3 tons per acre as best they could; potatoes got the lion's share of the fertilizer "200#" of a 2-10-7." Some "fertilizers" were sold which contained no plant nutrients whatsoever.

Alfalfa was grown on 38 acres in 1900 and produced a whopping two tons per acre. Just to keep it in was an accomplishment. In 1930 we still had only 7000 acres in Vermont. Improved varieties were nonexistent. We now have 40,000 acres of alfalfa and can expect a yield of 4-5 tons under proper conditions.

Progress is slow -- new ideas have been adopted slowly. Lack of money/<sup>in</sup>dairy farming and conservative attitudes by dairy farmers have both been factors.

One fact not often considered is that, while lime and fertilizers are more expensive, they are actually cheaper than ever before. Fertilizer analyses have jumped to astounding heights while prices have climbed more slowly than have prices of other farm commodities.

In 1935, 85% of milk would buy 550% of lime; in 1940 it would buy 700% of lime, in 1952 1050% of lime and today it is still a good buy.

Plant nutrients have advanced 13% since 1935 -- all items that farmers buy have risen 125% in the same period.

ACP stepped into the picture in 1936 and has done more to promote the use of lime and fertilizer than any other factor although there is no doubt but what it has been assisted by the Extension Service and, even more important, by the favorable economic situation due to war. This trend has been reversed since 1950 and is the cause of some concern today. Is it a healthy trend or not? Is the farmer really economizing or will he hurt his pocketbook in the future? These are questions that perhaps only time will answer.

Indirect benefits from the ACP program are numerous.-- Lime, fertilizers, drainage and other practices have made possible our present alfalfa acreage so that over a third of our farmers now grow this high yielding high protein crop. More than half of them grow ladino clover which has done more to improve our pastures than any other plant. Vermont leads New England in use of brome grass; one large seed company now sells almost two pounds of brome to every pound of Timothy seed sold in this State.

True, these crops have made necessary new management practices and new machinery to handle them. Grass silage, irrigation, artificial hay drying, forage choppers and hay balers are now essential on many farms. Lester Smith used to say, "Ladino got the farmer in trouble and they had to do something about it." I would prefer to say that these higher yielding crops have made it possible for farmers to justify the use of labor-saving devices which has made farming "more fun" than it used to be.

Has the soil actually benefited by these events? -- Results from a New England study show that generally speaking, cultivated soils are higher than forested soils in phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium and pH. A lower figure for OM is indicated, but I'm not so sure that Vermont's organic matter status might be better from some standpoints due to our larger acreage of sod crops.

Soil tests on 2500 samples tested at UVM last year show this trend:

<u>pH Range</u>	<u>% of total samples</u>
Below - 4.9	1
5.0 - 5.4	6
5.5 - 5.9	23
6.0 - 6.4	30
6.5 - 6.9	27
Above 7.0	14

41% are above a pH of 6.5

71% are above a pH of 6.0

94% are above a pH of 5.5

55% of these samples tested below medium in available phosphorus and 45% above medium (Medium as equivalent to 500% of 20% super per acre.)

Results show a definite build up in the soils tested, but only 5-10% of Vermont dairy farmers have their soil tested and these are very likely the same ones who are using lime and fertilizer of ACP origin and otherwise.

Available potash does not show this build up and likely never will on most dairy farms. Its "Easy go" properties demand small annual application. (Split applications are even more desirable).

Crop yields are up -- but averages for the State still leave much to be desired. Eleven tons of silage per acre is 55% of what could be grown with adequate fertility and yet some farmers produce over 20 tons which is equivalent to 100 bu. of corn as grain.

Improved pasture yields only 40% of what it should. Why? Because use of  $P_2O_5$  is 8% per year (60% is recommended). 3% of potash is used per year. (120% is recommended.)

Forage variety trials indicate that all adapted alfalfa varieties, grown in association with brome grass, treated to adequate fertility, for a three-year period, produced over 5 tons of dry matter per acre per year. Better management may have played a part.

A few farmers ahead; too many behind is perhaps the picture today. People always adopt new ideas to varying degrees; those who do profit by them. Experiments with date of seeding show that plants seeded at unfavorable times are not only slow in becoming established, but they never seem to catch up with those which had a good start. I suppose people are not much different. Over the long pull education (receptiveness to new ideas) really becomes important. The good farmers become better and the poor stay poor or become good, but I'm not sure that this is as it should be.

Where do we go from here? -- I'm most concerned over the drop in lime usage. We are now using about 55,000 tons as contrasted with a need of 300,000 tons per year. In 1944 we used over 118,000 tons and in 1950, 100,000 tons. This indicates that under more favorable economic conditions this problem will be less serious. Some farmers who have limed in the past are not now liming and are getting by. I only hope they don't get the idea that their fertility bank lasts forever. Vermont soils have low nutrient storage capacity, frequent replenishment is necessary.

Our soil test lab has introduced a lime requirement test which will be performed on all farmer samples as an additional tool for making lime recommendations.

An extra educational effort will be put forth by the Extension agronomist during the next year. Work with county ASC committees is contemplated so that they can do a better job on the firing line. A leaflet will



be printed sometime this year to re-emphasize as dramatically as possible the merits of liming. I am hoping that the lime industry will make a greater effort to promote their product. Sometimes it would seem that they have grown a bit complacent with the ACP doing a lot of the leg work. (See summary of "lime use" passed out at meeting).

Fertilizer sales also need to be pepped up. Industry has done a good advertising job and is fortunate in having an easier-to-sell product than the limestone industry in spite of the higher per ton cost. The quick response from fertilizers is a strong point in its favor. Too bad we can't hide 40% of nitrogen in each ton of lime without the farmer knowing it.

Super in the gutter is a valuable practice. It needs to be re-emphasized. Corrosion of gutter cleaners is too often used as an excuse for not using it. Many who claim they use super do not use it properly, in sufficient quantity or often enough. I wonder if some farmers don't have the idea that the ACP provides them with the amount of fertilizer they need and that they don't need more.

The Agronomy Department will continue to recommend 0-1-1 for seeding down in preference to 0-1-2 because of the need for phosphorus for seedling establishment. An 0-1-2 would supply about 200% of potash if used in amounts great enough to furnish the required phosphorus. A full grown stand of alfalfa or ladino might need this potash, but it would appear to be wasteful to apply it at seeding time.

The fact that 10 tons of manure treated with 50% of super is used does not alter the situation because the manure would add as much available potash as available phosphorus and the total ratio of nutrients would not be changed.

Seeding down with straight super instead of 0-20-20 may be economical on many heavy textured soils of the Champlain Valley.

The present economic doldrum is of a temporary nature. Demand for milk will eventually move into equilibrium with supply. The farmer who cut out all use of lime and fertilizer will find that his soil has been depleted and that it will take time to get his roughage program into high gear production which he must do to produce milk on a competitive basis with his neighbor down the road.

Soil fertility is not depleted or regenerated overnight. It might be better measured in terms of generations.

Minerals and other conservation practices are going to play an even greater role in dairy farming of the future with or without an ACP program, but an ACP program makes it easier for the farmer to carry out practices which will benefit not only his own farm but the people who consume his products. Greater efficiency, larger quantities and high quality will be his goals and you people are playing an important part in helping him achieve them.

## THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY RE THE ACP

Outline of Address by Ernest Gambell, Staff Assistant to the Administrator  
Agricultural Conservation Program Service, Washington, D. C.  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 5, 1955

1. ACP Service honored to have place again in Vermont Annual ASC Conference, to discuss this subject and to visit with you on some of the policies and objectives of ACP. Mr. Ritchie sends regrets. It is my pleasure to come to Vermont again -- the Green Mountain and Green Valley State.

One of ways we try to keep as close as we can to the farm and on "right track."

Morris L. Cooke's "20 Years of Grace" and Vermont's "20 Years of Soil Building" -- warning and performance (but not full attainment).

2. Opportunity and challenge to you and to us to participate jointly in thinking through one of our farmer-Government partnership programs.

Statement by Editor Eastman of American Agriculturist:

"If you did not have the privilege of participating in the Government, you would be holding secret meetings to get that privilege back."

3. Knowing interest and action that Vermont committeemen have long exercised with respect to ACP, I doubt that I can bring much new or "inside" information on the program itself. But, possibly a look at ACP's foundations and some of its policies and objectives.

4. Why and how ACP was started

- a. Original Agricultural Adjustment Act - primarily crop adjustment, but certain good land use provisions.
- b. Supreme Court decision -- Congress determined to provide farmer-Government partnership to help meet then current problems with particular emphasis on conservation.
- c. Vehicle at hand -- Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1935. Amended early 1936. To provide for ACP, with committee system to operate. (So agencies were linked in the same law even then -- SCS in original part; ACP and Extension in the amendment. Teamwork.)

5. The expanded Act (February 1936)

- a. 4 stated purposes deal with conservation.
- b. 5th was economic - adjustment payments.
- c. In 1938, price support law.
- d. 1943 last year of "combination ACP." (More recent appropriation acts have restricted ACP to a program of "soil building and soil and water-conserving practices."

6. ACP's specific purpose now:

Secretary has stated ACP's primary objective as "the protection of the public's interest in the Nation's soil and water resources," and its only purpose "to advance the overall conservation accomplishment of the Nation." The objective is to be accomplished by "sharing with individual farmers and ranchers in the cost of carrying out soil and water conserving practices which they otherwise would not carry out to the needed extent."

7. Congress and the Department consider ACP as a vital part of and support to the total conservation effort -- one of the several conservation tools:

- a. Research for soundness.
- b. Education for information, causing to act, some skills.
- c. Technical services for skills not readily acquired by many farmers.
- d. Commercial services and materials when and where needed.
- e. Credit adapted to farm needs.
- f. Cost-sharing -- to encourage taking the step and going further. (This dependent upon other tools for soundness.)

8. Each tool a different purpose -- expert in its field -- complementary to others:

- a. Like different tools on a farm.
- b. Could perhaps have one complicated machine.
- c. But even with right tools and not right weather (climate), not much crop.

9. ACP and the other tools are not the weather.

- a. Without the "economic climate" (or "weather") the tools alone just won't -- can't -- bring the harvest.
- b. Public does various things about the "climate" also. Government helps through marketing efforts, local agreements, foreign trade, price support and storage, subsidies, constant search to prevent waste and find new uses.

10. Farmer must know a tool's purpose to use it well.
  - a. ACP -- not a subsidy, not the "sunshine," not the climate, not intended to take their places.
  - b. Its purpose is incentive -- to encourage, to help "get crop planted," to help "break through the 'hardpan,'" help get experience doing the job right.
11. A good tool can be adjusted.
  - a. Capacity for adjustment -- how good it is.
  - b. Each year you committeemen and other agricultural workers do check:
    - (1) What you need ACP to do, to get that extra conservation in your county, community, farms.
    - (2) How to get it done right.
12. Rightness very important -- I believe we agree:
  - a. Not only to you (as farmers and public servants).
  - b. Also to the people who pay the bill -- their right to "mileage" in the long run.
13. To get that rightness, ACP has several adjustment mechanisms or "set screws."
  - a. Choice of practices offered for county to choose -- plus special and county practices, if needed. (Also practice details)
  - b. Rate adjustments.
  - c. Initial treatment -- sound start, experience, and a way to have a share for others who need to start. (Practice maintenance)
  - d. "Package practice" (adequate treatment of a recognized problem -- solving it, not "scattering shots.")
  - e. Step-by-step -- even more than a year to reach the goal in farmer's conservation plan.
  - f. Pooling agreements for community problems.
  - g. Purchase orders -- even all of cost on some parts, if farmer bears cost of other parts.
  - h. Assignments -- early payments.



- i. Teamwork: ACP in setting; "Conservation plan" reference on Form ACP-201; SCD plans; Vo-Ag projects; FHA soil and water conservation loans; small watersheds (Hope-Aiken Act).

Foreword to 1955 Bulletin: Department policy:

"Through it (ACP) the work of research, education, and technical assistance in soil and water conservation can be extended and made more effective."

"How well it succeeds will depend almost completely on how well it is used by local groups and individual farmers to meet the community and individual farm conservation problems of soil and water conservation which farmers and ranchers otherwise would not solve in 1955."

14. In this setting -- you are committeemen. What can you do?
  - a. Representative of farmers and taxpaying public. Nonfarm people have made you a trustee of much of their money -- expect you to find ways to invest it soundly, on an enduring basis, on farms.
  - b. You can know the soil and water conservation problems and needs of your county -- and what your farmers have accomplished and are trying to accomplish.
  - c. Know how other assistance operates to help farmers better manage soil and water resources and how those other services are related and inter-related. Role of community committeemen.
  - d. How to use each "tool" as needed -- to get "mileage," something that will add up and last.
  - e. See that other services know actual farm problems you and your farmers face -- and where those services can help.
  - f. Know program policies and provisions. Why as well as what. (You can tell what adjustments are needed and why.)
15. Something to remember before we turn to some of your questions: You know the story of the talents from Holy Writ: The steward who had a talent but buried it -- and the steward who used his and proved his stewardship. (And we are stewards -- as is well stated in a paragraph from "The Committeeman's Creed":

"I am a steward. As a committeeman I will assist in planning the conservation programs for the soil. I must realize the urgency of conservation -- that it must be done now. I must study to know the programs well and work to apply them intelligently to the farms of my county. It must be a constant goal that our lands not only be conserved but that they be improved. This work I must do well. It involves the future welfare of my country. May posterity approve my stewardship."



## FOOD, FIBRE AND THE FUTURE

Address by Earl L. Butz, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 5, 1955\*

Joe, Governor Johnson, Senator Aiken, and Fellow Folks of Agriculture:

I always enjoy hearing that introduction, Joe. You might also add that I belong to the YMCA, the Boy Scouts, and have my taxes paid.

It is a real thrill to be here tonight. Before this afternoon there were three states in the Union I had not visited. Tonight there are only two. This is my first visit to the great State of Vermont. The boys met me at the airport this afternoon and drove me around the territory for about 20 miles. We were on two or three farms here and it certainly was a pleasure to realize that that Briton was wrong when he said you lived in clearings up here. Because you got some mighty big clearings I saw this afternoon.

It is a thrill for another reason to be here tonight, that is to be in the home state of Senator George Aiken. I know you folks regard him as a neighbor here and as one of you, and I can see this evening why you do -- because he is one of you. You know they say a prophet is not without honor save in his home town, and I sometimes think that is true. But I sincerely want to tell you that American agriculture will forever be indebted to the wise leadership that Senator Aiken has given in the years he has been in the Senate, as chairman of the Agricultural Committee last session of the Congress and in the 80th session, and as the ranking minority member of that committee this year. All America looks up to George Aiken and we in the Department of Agriculture regard him very, very highly. And I want to say that he may be one of the boys to you but he is one of America's great agricultural leaders, and under that gray head of his is more wisdom than God put in the average head, and he puts it to good use, too. And I want to say that Secretary Benson feels the same way; there are many people in Washington who feel this way.

It is a pleasure to be here to go briefly through the campus of the University of Vermont this afternoon. As Joe said, we have had a number of your students come to Purdue University to do graduate work after they graduated from UVM and they have invariably been fine students. We would like to have more of them. Joe, I wish my dean at Purdue could have heard your remarks about the Department of Agricultural Economics; it is just budget making time out there. I wish somehow you would make a transcript of what you said and send it to him. I would be very grateful for that.

This is an unusual program. I have a time schedule here that Earl Wilson has and we are running ahead of schedule. Usually you run behind schedule, you know, and the speaker's in a spot where he has no time left and he has to hurry right through, but we are on schedule here tonight.

\*As reproduced from a radio transcript.

I am not quite sure yet whether I am a professor or a politician. I came to Washington last August. Before that I was 17 years on the staff of a Land Grant College doing the same work that Thurston Adams is doing here, only not as good, and I still miss it. I was back at Purdue a week ago and I had the privilege of addressing the agricultural student-faculty alumni banquet there. I got a real thrill out of talking to those 500 people in that room and so I am not quite sure whether I am here tonight as a professor or as a politician. I am quite sure I am not a politician, and I guess I am far enough away from a professor, so I guess I am not that either. The difference between them isn't very great anyway. It depends on your point of view. If you view them from this angle, you get one image, and if you view them from this angle, you get another image, but that is the way with a lot of things in life.

I had that brought home to me a while back. I was out attending a WCTU meeting. I had listened to this speaker giving a very spirited talk on the evils of whiskey, how it would rot your stomach out and eat holes in your intestines, and as he finished his talk he said, "Would anybody here like to testify about the evils of whiskey?"

Some old fellow in the right balcony rose. He appeared to be in his seventies. He was gray and stooped, and the chairman said, "Yes, Mr. Smith."

He said, "I am old Jim Smith. I am 72 years old. I attribute my long life to the fact that I never took a drink of whiskey."

"Thank you, Mr. Smith. Would anybody else like to testify?"

Just then some fellow in the left balcony rose. He appeared to be in his late seventies. He was bald and pink and wrinkled and stooped and shaky, and the chairman said, "Yes, Mr. Green."

"I'm old Tim Green. I'm 78 years old. I attribute my long life to the fact that I never took a drink of whiskey."

"Thank you, Mr. Green. Sit down. You see, folks, how harmful whiskey is. We'll now adjourn the meeting."

Just then some fellow in the center balcony rose and said, "Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Do you want some more testimony here tonight?"

The speaker said, "Well, I'm not sure about it but we'll hear what you have to say."

"Well, I just want to say that I have lived in this town all of my life. My old grandfather lived in this town all of his life. Granddad died ten years ago at the age of 83. Every day from the time Granddad was 16 years of age until he died at 83, he took a drink of whiskey four times a day. We buried Granddad ten years ago in this cemetery at the edge of town. Last week we had to move that cemetery on account of the new bypass coming around the city and we dug Granddad up. Just out of curiosity I opened the casket and took a look at Granddad, and I want to tell this crowd here tonight that ten years a corpse Granddad looks better than those two men who have just testified."

It all depends on your point of view. That's the way with a lot of questions, you know. You look at them from a different angle and get a different reflection.

Well, here I stand you see. You're always a little apprehensive about how your talk is going to go across. This is my first invasion in Vermont here and I don't know just how you're going to receive my remarks. I'm a Midwesterner from that area of high-priced feed that you have to buy. I think you're always a little apprehensive, you never know how your talk is going to go across.

The other night I was out speaking to a meeting and this fellow sat right down in front of me. He cupped his ear and leaned forward trying to hear what I had to say. When I finished my talk some people came by to say a few words and he came by. He said, "You know, Mr. Butz, I've wanted to hear you speak for quite a long while and this was my first opportunity tonight, but I had some difficulty hearing what you had to say." I remarked rather casually, "Well, don't feel too badly about that, I didn't say anything very important anyway." He said, "Well, that's what everybody told me."

Well, frankly it bothered me a bit, I have to admit, to have a complete stranger say something like that to me. I recovered myself a bit and acted as natural as I could and then some more people came along. A 12-year-old youngster stopped in front of me and looked me right in the eye and said, "Mr. Butz, that was sure a lousy talk." That did hurt me to have a 12-year-old tell me that, and a friend of mine standing there who knew the 12-year-old turned to me, and said, "Don't be too alarmed, Mr. Butz, about what that youngster just said. He's just a halfwit. He doesn't mean what he says; he only repeats what he hears other people say."

So I don't know what reaction I'm going to get here tonight. Frankly I'm a little concerned about it, you see. But I want to talk with you a little bit tonight. Mr. Heald over here has assigned me a title that I noticed this afternoon coming up on the plane. I believe he called it "Food, Fibre, and the Future." But it doesn't make any difference what my title is, I have just one talk anyway. It's like a professor. He uses the same notes year after year. Of course, the students change, so it doesn't make much difference. I only have one speech. I change the title on it frequently to make it sound differently.

A while back a Chamber of Commerce in southern Indiana wrote to me and asked if I would come down and give a talk, and asked what my subject would be. So I took my talk and wrote that I could come down and listed four titles that I could put my talk under you see. I said I can discuss any one of these four subjects. In about ten days I got a letter back and they said, "We have talked your four titles over very carefully. We would like you to come down and give talk No. 2." So I went down and gave my talk under title No. 2. I thought I did a pretty good job. In about six weeks I had a letter from the same Chamber saying, "Mr. Butz, we liked talk No. 2. Will you come down now and give us No. 4?"



But tonight I want to talk on whatever subject you want. I don't care. I think I'll change the subject on you. I think I'll call it "You Gotta Have A Dream." Because I saw some changes taking place in your agriculture out here this afternoon and I know that you've got some people up here on the campus dreaming and I know you people in these ASC (did I get the right letters? They've changed so often in the last 20 years, I can't keep up with them!) committees are dreaming, else you wouldn't be here tonight. So I want to title my remarks "You Gotta Have A Dream." I'm going to borrow that title from the song in the stage play, "South Pacific." The author of that play put a song in it, and I can only remember a couple of lines out of that song. He wrote "How you gonna have your dream come true? You gotta have a dream if you're gonna have your dream come true."

There are too many people in America today who complain that their dreams don't come true and they never took the time or the energy or the trouble to have a dream. It was people who had dreams who built this great land of ours, it was people who had dreams who built the productive farms you have in Vermont, built your institutions, your University of Vermont, built your farm program. It's people who had a dream and dared to put that dream into action. It took courage to do that. You know, sometimes it wasn't the popular thing in the particular time it was being done. It is people who will have dreams next year and the next ten years and dare to put those dreams into action that are going to make tomorrow a still better place to live. After all, that is what you and I are here for really.

You see, you and I have three awful wonderful things if you stop to think about each of us. We're really a wonderful mechanism, we are. You know the Lord gave each of us three things that all science and all human wisdom have never learned how to duplicate. He gave each of us a human life. Just think what that means, each of us has a human life to monkey around with, to do with what we want to.

Then He gave each of us a human mind, that mysterious, marvelous something that we call a human mind. Just think for a moment what it is that you've got to monkey around with here in the human mind. Oh, 20 years ago when you were in the sixth grade, you packed a little fact away back here above your right ear, and forgot about it. Last week you tucked another little fact away, completely unrelated to the first one, up here in another corner of that human mind. And next week you're going to have an experience of some kind that you will tuck another completely unrelated fact away some place else up here, you see. And ten days from now or ten years from now, some stimulus is going to make you put those three completely unrelated facts together and come up with something entirely new. Think of it -- isn't that terrific! And you've got one of those things, and I've got one, and all science has never learned how to duplicate that.

And the Lord gave us the third thing. He gave us a span of years in which to use that human life and that human mind. And that span of years -- time, you see -- is really the ultimate scarce resource we have because once that's gone you never can duplicate it. The half-hour we spend together here tonight, if we don't grow somehow during this half-hour, it is lost forever. We never can call it back. So just think what we've got here, you see, those three things -- a human life, a human mind, and a span of years.

And I want you to think about my theme here, "You Gotta Have A Dream." I'm going to speak rather frankly with you tonight. I want you to think, because each of us has a human mind. You won't all agree with me. That doesn't hurt me one bit. I hope you don't agree with me because it's only when idea clashes against idea and mind clashes against mind that you have intellectual growth. I hope that you argue with me mentally as we go along because that's the way we grow, that's the way we reach answers in America. Don't argue too vigorously with me, that's not good for your health.

I was out the other night at a meeting. After I finished it, an old fellow, a farmer, came up to me. He was the very picture of health. He was in his seventies.

I said, "You certainly are a healthy looking specimen."

He said, "Yes, Mr. Butz."

I said, "How old are you?"

"73."

"Healthy all your life?"

"Yes, sir."

"You married?"

"Yup."

"How long you been married?"

"52 years."

"Your wife living?"

"Yup."

"How's her health?"

"Excellent."

"Well, how do you account for the fact that you've been married all these years and you're in such excellent health?"

He said, "Well, it's very simple. When we got married 52 years ago we had an agreement, my wife and I. Whenever I blew my top, my wife agreed to keep her mouth shut and not say anything until I calmed down and could speak rationally and my wife has done that through the years. We agreed that whenever my wife blew her top, I was going to put on my hat and coat and go out and stay out until she calmed down. You know, Mr. Butz, it's marvelous what 52 years in the open air and sunshine will do for a man."

So don't argue too violently with me now but argue a little as we go along. That's all right.

Now then, I haven't lived around here as long as some of you fellows. There are a lot of things I haven't learned but there is one thing I think I have learned and that is the most constant thing in this American society of ours is change. I think you have to recognize that, you have to recognize it in your farm programs, you have to recognize it in any program you get for agriculture. The most constant thing is change. Today is different than yesterday. Tomorrow is going to be different from today. I'm positive of it. I hope it is going to be different in a better way. I'm confident it is going to be different in a better way. If it isn't, you and I are at fault because nobody except you and me is going to make tomorrow. We're going to make it, nobody else is. But I know it is going to be different. The law of change, a very rapidly changing environment. I want you to ask yourself a question. I want you to ask it right now and then again before you go to bed tonight. No, you're going to be here tonight -- before this weekend, I want you to get off in a room all by yourself and ask this question, "Am I changing? And are the organizations I represent changing so that I can make a maximum contribution to the changing environment in which I operate? Or do I still cling to an obsolete concept, an obsolete way of doing things, an obsolete program, an obsolete way of farming, an obsolete concept of Government?" Because it too must be progressive, you see. I want you to ask the question, "Am I changing?" Not, is my neighbor changing, but am I changing? It is so easy to look across the field and say, "Why that old relic over there, he's behind the times." I want you to ask "Am I changing?" Before this week is out, I'm serious about this, I want you to sit down all by yourself in the back room just for five minutes and ask yourself seriously, "Am I changing? Are the organizations that I direct changing so that I can fit into this changing environment in which I live?" You know it is a marvelous time the Lord has given you and me to live on the face of the earth. One of the most marvelous times in all history. This era of change. The age of science and technology. Think of the changes you have experienced on your own farm. The age of science and technology.

If you were to put the full recorded history of man on the face of your clock that hangs on your kitchen wall at home, starting back with the story of Creation in the Garden of Eden some six thousand years ago, and bring the hands of your clock around until 1855, just a hundred years ago, the hands of your clock have moved from noon around until fifteen minutes of midnight. That last 15 minutes will be the last 100 years of the recorded history of man on this earth. The marvelous



thing about it is that in that last 15 minutes in this great land of America we have made more progress in production per worker than in the whole previous eleven hours and forty-five minutes. It is a perfectly marvelous phenomenon when you stop and think about it. You see, it is production per worker on our farms, in our factories and our transportation systems that gives us this marvelously high standard of living we enjoy in America. And there has been more progress in the last 15 minutes than in the whole previous eleven hours and forty-five minutes. Many of us sitting in this room tonight have experienced and taken part in most of that change, in our own lifetime. You see, we are right in the middle of it, right here in 1955. It's a thrilling time to be permitted to live in the whole history of the earth. Let's illustrate this with an agricultural illustration.

Let's assume for a moment that you were a good farmer back in ancient Egypt in the days of Moses when the children of Israel were in Egypt. Some twelve centuries before Christ, it was then the centre of civilization. You were a good farmer. You died and they buried you beside the Pyramids some place.

Let's bring you back to life now and drop you on a good Italian farm in the days of Caesar, some twelve centuries later. Italy was then the centre of civilization. You could have run that Italian farm with no additional instruction from what you had back in ancient Egypt, twelve centuries earlier, for the art of agriculture had not changed, or the art of engineering or masonry or anything else.

But why go that far back? Let's bring you to life again and drop you on a good English farm in Shakespeare's day, just 400 years ago. England was then the centre of civilization. You could have run that English farm with no additional instruction from what you had back in ancient Egypt, 26 centuries earlier, for the art of agriculture had not changed, the art of engineering had not changed, the art of building had not changed, the art of medicine had not changed, we were still in the blood-letting stage. If you had a fever, they pierced your vein and let some blood out. The art of dentistry had not changed. My last contact with the dentist leads me to believe it hasn't changed yet, for that matter. But you get my point. Civilization stood still those centuries and yet people in those days had the same brain capacity we have today, they had the same natural resources, they had the same everything we have, but somehow they hadn't unlocked those secrets and put them to a useful purpose.

But why go that far back? Let's bring you to America and put you on Thomas Jefferson's farm down here in Virginia 150 years ago. Jefferson was a pretty good farmer in his day. And that ancient Egyptian farmer could have run Jefferson's farm just 150 years ago with practically no additional instruction. Still the same crude source of motive power, it came from muscles you see, not from machines, it may have been animal muscles or human muscles. Still the same crops with the exception of tobacco, still the same crude implements, the steel moldboard plow is only 100 years old in this country, and still the same high

proportion of our population on the land, some 90 to 95 percent of our people on the land you see, agriculture so inefficient that it took everybody to produce enough food and fibre to keep us going practically. But today we have some 13 percent of our people on the land in America, and they aren't all farmers, part of them are what I call windshield farmers or drugstore cowboys or what have you. About 10 percent of our people in America today produce the food and fibre to feed the other 90 percent of us better than any other place in the world because we have learned how to do it so efficiently on the American farm, you see.

Well, let's bring that ancient Egyptian farmer up to 1955 and put him on a good Vermont farm today. He'd be a lost soul. You wouldn't dare turn him loose out here today without long years of instruction and hard years of apprenticeship. He wouldn't even recognize the working end of a tractor. He'd raise cries of witchcraft at all these marvelous mechanical and electrical things you see performed on your farm. Because running this successful Vermont farm today is one of the most difficult jobs in Vermont. You have to make managerial decisions covering a much wider area of subject matter in the course of a week than does the manager of a men's clothing store here in Burlington. I'm not trying to depreciate that job either. You have more capital invested than has many a businessman in your county seat towns. You have to know more about more things. It now becomes one of the most difficult jobs there is.

I was out on a farm this afternoon here, owned by a young man who was one of our former graduate students at Purdue, who could have taken a job. I understand the dean has tried to get him to take a job here and we had jobs for him out there, but he said, "I want to farm," and I admire him for it. He's running a good dairy farm out here. He and his young wife are just getting started. As nearly as I can tell he has somewhere in the neighborhood of \$50,000 invested out there. I drove past farms here this afternoon where the investment, I would say, will run \$50,000, \$75,000 or even \$100,000 on what I conceive to be family farms. They may have a hired man but they are family farms. That gets to be big business.

Last year I took a group of farms out in the Corn Belt and kept records on them for Purdue University, just ordinary family farms. They averaged 250 acres in size, about 200 acres tillable on the average. They averaged \$87,000 investment per farm. I was rather amazed. That gets to be big business. I've always thought of the farmer as a little guy but there's nothing little about that. Now I wondered how much that would average per acre on those farms. I discovered that they average 1 3/4 workers per farm. I made a quick division and came out with \$50,000 investment per worker on those farms. It may not run quite that high on your farms but it will run \$25,000 or \$30,000 per worker on the average, on your family farms around here. It takes that much investment to create just one agricultural job. In American industry tonight it takes between \$12,000 and \$15,000 to create one industrial job. That means that it now takes twice as much capital



investment to create one agricultural job on your good family dairy farms here as it does to create one industrial job in the average American industry.

Now I don't know where the point is that a farmer becomes more of a capitalist than he is a laborer because I haven't learned yet how to equate inputs of capital and labor. But when you get that much capital invested in one job, I want to tell you it's big business. It's no longer a plaything, you see. When you and I were growing up, they used to say if you can't do anything else you can farm. And I want to tell you that the time is here now with agriculture being the scientific and technological industry it is, if you can't farm, you better do something else. And I say that out of all due respect to agriculture, too, for it is now a difficult job to do it successfully and calls for a high level of managerial capacity to manage that kind of capital and that kind of technology and that kind of science successfully. It is going to become more so in the future I am quite sure.

Well, let's move on here. I said I was going to ask you to dream a little bit but so far I've been reminiscing. Last summer I was driving down through West Virginia and stopped beside the road one afternoon to talk to the people who lived there. I remarked casually, trying to open up a conversation, "Have you lived here all your life?" And he said, "Not yet."

I don't know how old you have to be to reminisce, I'm not that old yet anyway because I haven't lived here all my life either, but with that background let's look at some other aspects of agriculture here now. We're buying science and technology quite rapidly, putting capital in it rapidly, we're putting power in it rapidly. Just think in your own experience how much more power one man directs on your farm now than he did a generation ago. Just think for a moment how much more horsepower you have at your control. It really means that the essential ingredient of success in agriculture today is brainpower, that brainpower has replaced horsepower as the central ingredient of success in American agriculture today. Our horsepower we get from mechanical means and we're just on the threshold of this whole atomic era, you see, with cheap power ahead of us, how cheap I don't know, but I am quite sure that we're just on the verge of a whole new age in the use of power in America here, when we learn how to develop it, because we've got it now.

Now let's look at some other things we're doing in agriculture though, while we're doing this. Agriculture has been in a bit of a cost-price squeeze the last year and that's not news to you dairy farmers, I know. Senator Aiken knows it, and we all know it. We can't live in Washington long without hearing about that, and I want to say just a few words about the economic situation affecting agriculture because with this amount of capital invested in your business you are subject in a peculiar way to swings in the economic curve. It doesn't have to swing down very far very long before you feel it, until somebody begins to get pinched and may even leave the business. You are in a situation now where your cash expenses are high and you don't have to get in the cost-price

squeeze very long until somebody gets liquidated, and therefore agriculture is especially interested in the economic situation. We have been suffering from a decline in farm income, that is not news to you. It has come as a result of the postwar adjustments we've been going through and I want to look at it for just a moment.

I first want to look at the general economy because one of the first, one of the most important, things affecting the welfare of agriculture is the welfare of the whole society. We have been in the last year in a period of relative economic stability, when you look at the overall economy. The general price level in the United States, that's the level of all prices taken together, has fluctuated in the last twelve months within the very narrow range of two percent and that's practically no fluctuation. It stands exactly where it was a year ago. That's practically no fluctuation. That's the average of all prices, industrial prices, farm prices, and everything else you see. That's stability.

Now then, a lot of us the last dozen years or so of wartime inflation have gotten used to normal being slanted upwards, you see. We think ten percent higher than last year is normal; of course, we came through the war that way; labor did, business did, agriculture did, industry did. So we've gotten used to a curve something like that as normal and when we have stability we think we have a downward trend, because, after all, it is all relative. A lot of people think that.

Then last fall we had an election in America and of course, we heard a lot of loose talk kicking around in election year. Senator, I guess you weren't running last year so there wasn't any loose talk up here but the Governor was. Of course, I know you didn't talk loose but your opponent probably did, I don't know who he was here. I'll take it out of Vermont; I wasn't up here last year, I was in some other State. One of the great circuses we have in America is every year we have a great National circus, we call it election, you know, and people say things but you overlook it for you know they don't mean it. But there was a lot of loose talk kicking around last fall about this depression that America was experiencing in 1954.

Now the farm prices were going down some in 1954. You look back on it now and it appears that we have reached the bottom of this economic adjustment about last July and since then these basic economic indicators have been headed upward modestly but constantly. That's a rather hopeful sign I think. As we look back on 1954, it turned out to be the second biggest economic year in the history of America. It was the most prosperous depression I ever experienced. The second biggest economic year in the history of America. And in my book the second biggest economic year in the history of America is a long, long way from the kind of depression some of our radical alarmists would have us believe we were experiencing last year.

It wasn't a bad year. It could have been the biggest economic year in the history of America if President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles had cooked up a first-class war someplace. It wouldn't have been too difficult to



have done so, because the world is pretty trigger-happy these days, as you know. But last year was the second biggest economic year in our history at a time when Federal expenditures had been reduced by some eleven billion dollars, I believe it was; at a time when the Federal tax take had been reduced by seven billion dollars as I recall; and it was a year without war. It was the first year in some twenty years without an American battlefield somewhere around the world and it was the first year in some years that there wasn't an American soldier being shot at some place around the world. Still it was the second biggest economic year in the history of America.

I think I voice the sentiment of millions and millions of American parents when I stand here tonight, the father of two sons eight and twelve years of age, and say that for my part I am willing to take a modestly lower but stable level of economic activity and not have a war every half generation. It's a mighty cheap price to pay for it.

I say that last year was the second biggest year. It now appears that 1955, the way things are going, is going to exceed the previous record year of 1953. Business indicators are looking up. As we sit here tonight, the level of consumers' spending in the United States is at an all-time high. As we sit here tonight, the level of consumers' disposable income (that's their income after taxes -- that's what they have either to spend or to save) is at an all-time high and still headed upward. It looks like 1955 is going to be the biggest economic year in our history.

Now, why do I say all that? I say it because with that kind of a general economic environment, it's impossible for any particular sector of the economy such as agriculture to be depressed very bad very long. Now I know we're in a bit of a cost-price squeeze. Our farm income has come down some 25 percent, from the high it reached in 1947, after World War II, and that squeeze has hurt. Again in agriculture it appears to us the decline has been stopped. That was the first job, to get the decline stopped. Now there was a lot of loose talk kicking around last fall about Mr. Benson, the Secretary of Agriculture, being responsible for the price decline, about the Agricultural Act of 1954 that your own Senator Aiken engineered through the Congress being responsible for the decline in farm income. I said there was a lot of loose talk kicking around about that.

Let's look for a moment and see what's up. Let's look at the parity ratio. Now nobody knows quite what parity means in the United States. I've never found a professor who could quite explain it so that I could understand it. Some politicians may understand it but I don't know. Somebody told me a while back the politician's bible now reads, "There abideth Faith, Hope and Parity, and of these the greatest is Parity." And I think there is some truth to that.

Let's look and see for a moment what happens. Since Mr. Benson became Secretary of Agriculture a little over two years ago, the U. S. parity ratio has fluctuated within the very narrow range of eight points. It's now seven points below where it was when he became Secretary, in January of 1953. In the seven months before he became Secretary of Agriculture the parity ratio dropped 10 points. In the twenty-three months before he became Secretary of Agriculture the parity ratio declined 19 points, that was from the high it reached in February 1951 just after the Korean War had broken out. It declined 19 points in the two years before Mr. Benson became Secretary of Agriculture. It is now seven points lower than it was when he became Secretary of Agriculture. Now the 19 points it declined before he became Secretary was not the fault of President Truman, not the fault of Secretary of Agriculture Brannan, that was simply the postwar adjustment that was more or less inevitable. The slowing down of that decline of the last two years I'd like to take credit for myself on the part of the administration, I'd like to give credit to Mr. Benson for it. Again he may have been partly responsible for it but the adjustment was largely over. The point I want to make is that this adjustment has pretty largely stopped. During the last year our prices received by farmers have declined a little bit but in the last several months it has pretty well leveled off. The parity ratio is pretty well leveled off. The parity ratio in 1954 averaged only three points below the ratio in 1953.

So what I'm saying is that on the average I think this decline has been stopped. The decline in income has been stopped. Now that's the average I'm talking about. Of course, the average, you know, includes everything from California citrus growers, to Vermont dairy farmers, to North Dakota potato growers. You can cover up a multitude of evils with an average, I know. In America we are always giving averages. You average my salary with Henry Ford's salary and you get a pretty respectable figure, but it doesn't represent either one of us very well. Somebody has said the typical American has this concept of average. If one foot is in the oven and the other frozen in a cake of ice, on the average you will be comfortable. I'm talking about average conditions here.

Let's look now and see what's happened. I'm asking you to dream a little bit now. I'm going to come back to that theme after a while. Let's look and see what's happened here in this agriculture that's changing so rapidly, where we're trying to apply science and technology, where we're trying to produce more and more per worker in agriculture so that each man working in agriculture can have a higher standard of living for himself and his family. We have a system of price supports in America that grew up sort of like Topsy and we have been playing politics with it in recent years. As one who loves agriculture I am very sorry that the farm program has gotten into partisan politics, and I think most of us in American agriculture regret very, very much that the farm program in America has become a political football. That is unfortunate. It will not be good for the longtime welfare of American agriculture. For many many years our farm programs were



bipartisan in character. In the early days of the New Deal when Mr. Roosevelt became President we had the AAA and we had to have price support programs and they were bipartisan in character pretty largely. The Congress may have divided geographically but seldom divided politically on those issues and the programs were pretty much the programs recommended by the leading farm organizations. They continued that way for a time, I think probably the thing that did as much as anything to put the farm program in partisan politics was the introduction of the Brannan Plan that was proposed some five or six years ago, whenever it was. This tended to put the farm program into partisan politics and unfortunately that is where it is today.

Last August, I believe it was, the President signed the Agricultural Act of 1954, of which your own beloved George Aiken was co-author and chief general, I think, in getting it through the Senate and through the committee that finally passed on it between the two Houses. That provided for a new philosophy of farm price supports that we call the flexible farm price support program. But this wasn't new either because the Agricultural Act of 1937 provided for flexible farm price supports between the range of 52% and 75% of parity and parity was much lower than it is now. That had bipartisan backing by both parties and it was signed by a Democratic President. Then came the Agricultural Act of 1949 that again provided for flexible farm price supports. It had bipartisan backing and was again signed by a Democratic President and had the backing of all the farm organizations, including the Farmers' Union that now so vigorously opposes flexible farm price supports. So it was good then, you see, but now that it has gotten into politics, it is not good. The major part of our country seems to feel that it is not good. Anyway, we passed this Act last year to become effective for flexible farm price supports on the 1955 basic crops.

The important point I want to make is that the deterioration of farm income we have experienced has occurred under high rigid farm price supports. They did not stop the decline in farm income we have experienced. And yet as we sit here tonight, we have introduced into the House of Representatives in Washington a piece of legislation that was reported out by the House Agricultural Committee that calls again for a three-year extension of high rigid price supports at 90% of parity. They would therefore impose upon the American agricultural economy another dose of the same medicine that brought us into the diseased condition we are in today. This, I am sorry to say, from where I sit is pure political maneuvering, and yet there is sufficient strength back of it that we're not taking it lightly in Washington. Again they are trying to postpone for three more years the operation of what many agricultural leaders conceive to be an economically sound system of farm price supports. They are trying to prolong for three more years the system of supports that has got us into this mess we're in, for today the United States Government owns or has under loan seven and four-tenths billion dollars worth of commodities.

The United States Government, through the Commodity Credit Corporation, tonight owns or has under loan over a billion bushels of wheat, more than a total year's needs for this country. We own some 650 million bushels -- we have wheat stored in Liberty ships in the Chesapeake Bay, in the Columbia River at Portland, in Puget Sound at Seattle. We've got it running out of our ears.

We own 600 million bushels of corn. We're going to have a corner on the corn market before another ear of corn is produced. If you or I did that, they'd prosecute us for it.

We own or have under loan some eight million bales of cotton, a total year's supply of cotton.

We own 230 million pounds of butter tonight. We're rather happy about that. Seven months ago we had 260 million pounds but we've worked this down. I want to come back to that in just a moment.

We own tonight 325 million pounds of cheese and that's a pretty big chunk of cheese.

But think of that, the United States Government which neither eats food nor wears clothes tonight owns or has under loan seven and four-tenths billion dollars worth of food and fibre that the good farmers of America produced for somebody to use. They didn't produce it to sell to the Government; they didn't produce it for useless storage; they produced it for somebody to use.

But as we sit here tonight, I want you to think that around the world now two people out of three tonight are going to go to bed hungry. Fortunately not many of them will be in the United States. In this old world tonight two people out of three are going to go to bed without enough food to eat. Somehow we haven't dreamed enough, we haven't put ourselves sufficiently to the task of figuring out some way so that we can engage in a healthy trade in this world so that this great productive plant that we call the American agricultural plant can unleash the productive capacity it has to help solve that terrific problem.

What are we doing in America instead tonight? Instead we have clamped upon American agriculture some of the most rigid production and marketing controls in the history of American agriculture -- controls that violate every philosophy in the body of Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Benson, that run counter to my own philosophy, that run counter to Senator Aiken's philosophy, and yet as a matter of necessity we have had to clamp those ironclad controls on American agriculture until -- well, let's take burley tobacco.

There is a minimum of seven-tenths of an acre below which you can't squeeze a farmer and Congress in its wisdom has said that he can't be squeezed below seven-tenths of an acre because he has to have that much to make a living. They just voted the other day to squeeze that

down to five-tenths of an acre now, in two jumps, a tenth of an acre each year. But do you know that three-fourths of our allotments of burley tobacco in the United States are now at the minimum of seven-tenths of an acre, and a third of our total burley production in the United States is on those minimum seven-tenths of an acre allotments? We're going to squeeze them back to five-tenths of an acre.

In the case of cotton in the South we are squeezing them back on cotton until they have an acre and a half or two acres or two and a half acres and the Southern Senators and Representatives have been coming into the office saying "What in the world are you going to do about my poor farmers? They can't make a living off two acres of cotton."

I was out in the Pacific Northwest a month ago meeting with some wheat growers out there, with a 55 million acre allotment on wheat in this country, and we've cut our wheat growers back to the point where they find it difficult to make a living if they don't have the alternatives to shift to.

And what are we doing now? Seven-tenths of an acre, six-tenths, five-tenths of an acre of tobacco, two acres of cotton, half an allotment of wheat -- we're rationing poverty.

(Note: This concluded the talk as recorded for radio presentation. Mr. Butz concluded by urging all to think of ways and means of helping us achieve a prosperous Agriculture.)





## FARM LABOR AND THE DRAFT LAWS

Introduction given by A. F. Heald, ASC Administrative Officer  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 6, 1955.

We have once again had illustrated to us how the passing of a few months or years can change the situation in our country and how it can very greatly affect our agricultural plans. First, we need more production - then, better distribution - then, more consumption - then, more of some crops and less of others. This means our farm program must be flexible and must be understood by a lot of people, particularly farm people.

We in the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation group need to be leaders in understanding these changes. It is a challenge to all of us to keep up to the times.

Two important things in relation to our farm picture are farm labor and the draft laws. That is why this morning we have scheduled a discussion on these subjects.

### Our Responsibilities

#### Selective Service

Early in 1954, the State and county ASC committees were instructed to assume the responsibilities formerly performed by the Agricultural Mobilization Committees as they related to Selective Service. Selective Service headquarters cooperated with the Department and issued Memo No. 13 to their local boards which outlined "Cooperation - Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committees and Local Boards." Copies of this memo were furnished to you county committeemen. The memo pointed out that continued close cooperation should be maintained between the local boards and the ASC groups and explained that the local boards could consult with ASC regarding workload of farm workers. We have continually pointed out to you people that county committees working with the county agents should keep in close contact with local boards, understand their problems and let them understand yours. It should be noted that local boards are instructed not to request or expect representatives of ASC committees to recommend the classification in which a registrant should be placed, but close working relationships should be maintained between ASC committees and local boards in order that full consideration may be given at all times to the need for an adequate work force on the farms.

We have with us this morning Merton Ashton, Director of the Selective Service System. I will call on Mr. Ashton a little later to bring us up to date on the draft laws and Selective Service in Vermont.

#### Farm Labor

We have for many years maintained close working relationships with the Farm Labor program in Vermont. Merrill Walker, State Farm Placement Supervisor for the Vermont Employment Service, has been very helpful in keeping us

informed of the situation in our State. We in turn have offered the facilities of our county and community committee system to act as contact points for the Farm Labor Boards throughout the State. Through this system, we believe that we can help keep a better-informed farm group.

Following these discussions, we will have a chance to ask these people some questions and I hope that you people will make notes on the discussions and take steps when you get back home to carry out the suggestions which have been made.

With this introduction, we will now go into our panel discussion.

## FARM LABOR AND THE DRAFT LAWS

Address by Merton Ashton, Deputy Director, Selective Service System  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 6, 1955

I am here today representing Colonel Fred S. Kent, State Director of the Vermont Selective Service System, and both Colonel Kent and I thank the Vermont Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee for the invitation extended to us to attend this, your annual conference.

There are two general misunderstandings concerning the present Selective Service Law, which, by the way, is a Federal draft law and not a State draft law, that we wish to clear up.

1. Many times during the past year we have seen in print and heard over the radio or the television that the present draft law will expire after June 30, 1955. If the Congress does not amend the present law, actually only two phases of the present law will expire after June 30, 1955, and these are:

a. We cannot register and process after June 30, 1955, a special registrant (physician, dentist, veterinarian) born prior to August 30, 1922

AND

b. We cannot induct a regular registrant after June 30, 1955, who has not been deferred under Section 6 of the law.

Without an amendment to the Universal Military Training and Service Act, our available pool of men liable for twenty-four months of military service will be greatly reduced after June 30, 1955, but registration will still continue in force for regular registrants and those who have been deferred can be inducted up until they reach age thirty-five. However, legislation is now under consideration (already passed by the House of Representatives on February 8, 1955) to amend the present law which extends the expiration date to June 30, 1959 and extends the so-called "Doctor Draft" to June 30, 1957.

2. Too many persons have the opinion that a 2-C deferment is an exemption for the registrant from military service. The Universal Military Training and Service Act does provide for exemptions for certain veterans, reservists, ministers of religion, students of religion, certain elected officials and for conscientious objectors, but the law does not provide an exemption from military service for any registrant engaged in and deferred for a necessary and essential occupation such as agriculture. An occupational deferment only delays to a later date the processing of a registrant for his twenty-four (24) months of military service. Therefore, if a farm boy requests and receives a 2-C deferment he is agreeing to a delay in meeting his liabilities and obligations for twenty-four (24) months of military service and he is also agreeing to an extension of his age of liability from age 26 to age 35.



When we get a chance, we like to enlist groups such as this to be the bearers of at least one basic fact concerning the Selective Service System and that is the liability for registration which can be stated as follows: All male citizens and all male aliens, who have been admitted to the United States for permanent residence, must register with the Selective Service System if they were born after August 30, 1922, and have reached age eighteen. There are two minor facts closely related to the above statement:

1. That such a man, who is on active military duty when he reaches age eighteen, is not required to register with the Selective Service System until after he is separated from such military duty

AND

2. Certain male aliens in the above age group who are admitted to the United States for temporary residence must register and are liable for military service as soon as they have resided in the United States for one year.

We would also like members of this committee to advise farm boys, their parents and their employers that:

1. It is quite possible that some boys may not be called for their twenty-four months of military service under existing conditions if they do not request and receive a deferment under Section 6 of the Universal Military Training and Service Act, as amended.
2. Farm boys should give considered thought to the obligations and liabilities imposed on them when they ask and receive a 2-C deferment under Section 6 of the Universal Military Training and Service Act.
3. Farm boys who are producing agricultural commodities for sale in amounts well above the average for their county should be encouraged to take advantage of joining the Vermont National Guard prior to reaching age eighteen and one-half because they may be deferred in Class 1-D, so long as they participate satisfactorily in a National Guard unit. A proposed amendment to the Universal Military Training and Service Act would not extend the age of liability of a registrant deferred in Class 1-D as a National Guard reservist beyond age twenty-six.

If the Universal Military Training and Service Act is amended as already passed by the House of Representatives, Vermont local boards would be requested to advise both the employer and the registrant:

1. That an original deferment in Class 2-C will extend the registrant's age of liability from age 26 to age 35.
2. That an original deferment in Class 2-C will be granted only in the most deserving cases and then in accordance with the strict interpretation of the Selective Service regulations

pertaining to occupational deferments, after it has been clearly demonstrated that the registrant is employed full-time on a farm producing agricultural commodities for sale well above the average for the county concerned, that there is no available replacement at standard wages and that removal of the registrant will result in a serious loss of production.

3. That a 2-C deferment is not an exemption but merely a temporary delay.

I hope I have raised a few points that will encourage questions from the group.



## FARM LABOR AND THE DRAFT LAWS

Address by Merrill Walker, State Farm Placement Supervisor  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 6, 1955

Most farms in Vermont are dairy, requiring skilled workers. Since World War II it has been difficult to find enough experienced year-round farm help to fill their orders. There is also a shortage of seasonal workers on these farms during the planting and harvest times. Other crops which need extra help are the apple harvest, and in some areas the string-bean, and sweet corn for canning, also potato and maple sugar harvest.

Some workers are also recruited for the processing of dairy products and the canning of corn and beans.

For the current year, in spite of increased industrial unemployment, we expect that the shortage of experienced dairy farm workers will in no way be helped. I mean experienced dairy hands because year-round dairy farm workers must be skilled. They must know how to operate all farm machinery and know how to milk and care for the dairy. They cannot be compared with the migrant field workers called farm-workers in the South.

We do the best we can to fill our farm orders from our office file and through advertising in the newspaper and the radio. They are also put on the job inventory and copies go into other states. Seems like every year the shortage gets worse.

Where we are unable to get American workers, and the farmer is willing to hire Canadian farm help, we issue permits to bring in these men. Some farmers hesitate to sign the agreement. We have an agreement with the Immigration Service to bring in a limited number of these men in 1955.

As most of you already know the Vermont State Farm Bureau writes the bond and serves as the agent to import these workers.

The Immigration Service furnishes our service with the necessary individual importation forms.

The local employment office may approve the issuance of an importation permit to an individual farmer provided:

1. The farmer has an order on file for a worker and the local office has been unable to fill the order.
2. The farmer has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Farm Placement Representative that the worker is needed based on the size of the farm, number of cows being milked and the number of other hired hands.

Before the farmer receives the permit he must sign an agreement stating he will employ his worker for farm work only, and that he will pay at least the minimum wage stated in the agreement. He also agrees to accept as a replacement a qualified American worker. He further agrees to notify our local office if his worker leaves his employ or returns to Canada.

Our local employment office maintains the order active during the time the Canadian is employed here. The Vermont State Farm Bureau receives a fee of \$5.00 from the farmer when a permit is issued. If his worker is returned to Canada he can get a permit to bring in another without charge.

Other out-of-area workers who help out are Vermont Farm Volunteers. Some of these are agriculture school age youth who serve on the job training on farms. They come as early as late March and stay until into October.

The Cooperative Farm Personal Service makes arrangements with schools in other states for recruitment of this youth. Local Farm Placement Representatives accept orders from selected Vermont farmers. Registrations are received from the Cooperative in the local offices and our Farm Placement Representatives make necessary travel arrangements and in most cases meet them at the bus or train and take them to the farm.

Follow-up visits are made on these youth to see that arrangements are agreeable to both farmer and youth. We will probably place over 200 of these out-of-state youth this year in addition to our local youth. A few of these are girls. Our local youth have preference over the out-of-state for placement.

At present we have 17 agriculture students working on farms here. This program has been in operation for more than twelve years and has proved a satisfactory service to many farmers.

As I see it now the farm labor market for 1955 won't be much different than 1954. Perhaps a little less local help available. There is more of a shortage of good single men than there is of married men. We have difficulty at times placing married men with extra large families.



## SUGGESTIONS FROM OUR CO-WORKERS

Introduction by Hugh Evans, Chairman, Vermont State ASC Committee  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 6, 1955

We in Vermont are proud of the fact that we have always had good working relationships with other agricultural groups. Our program through the years has received their support and help. They helped it get started and have continued to help guide it. We want and welcome their continued cooperation.

For the last two years we have had joint responsibility in developing our ACP Program with the Forest Service and Soil Conservation Service. This has meant that we have worked still closer together.

This morning we want to hear from these people that we have worked with and give them an opportunity to make additional suggestions and comments. We have asked them to be frank with their recommendations and hope that they will do just that.

Now, let me introduce the people on our panel. Since our time is limited your comments will have to be brief. I will call on each of our panel members for these comments and there will be time for discussion after we have heard from all of them.



SUGGESTIONS FROM OUR CO-WORKERS  
IN THE SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

Address by Lemuel J. Peet, State Conservationist  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 6, 1955

The close working relations required by our participation in the technical phases of certain ACP practices and in ACP program formulation has resulted, I am certain, in better understanding of each other's work and problems. This is what might be expected, particularly since we both have similar objectives - the protection and improvement of our soil, water and plant resources. We have different tools - in one instance cost-sharing, and in the other technical services. These and other conservation tools are most effective when used in combination. Teamwork is essential for their effective use in combination.

Many of the problems of concern in past years have been pretty well ironed out. For example, referrals are received more promptly from County ASC Committees and we are better organized to service requests more promptly. Problems arise, from time to time, of course, but I believe they are mostly of the kind that can be worked out by sitting down together at the county level.

In reading county recommendations for next year's ACP program, I noticed most counties favored using the purchase order plan for permanent practices. There may be problems in connection with administering the purchase order plan - there would likely be the first year - but our men have told me that farmers seem to like it and that they think farmers will carry out more of the practices for which they sign up because of it. We would be happy to see more counties adopt the plan.

One of the things that has bothered us, and perhaps it has you, too, is that a flat rate per cubic yard or other unit sometimes results in a farmer receiving a cost-share considerably over 50% of actual cost, and in other cases considerably less than 50%. For this reason we think a payment of some percentage of actual cost would be more equitable. However, we do not like to make a cost estimate in advance of construction for use as a basis for payment. We can estimate the number of units but so many factors affect the cost per unit that it often puts us in an embarrassing position. If our estimate is too low and the cost-share is based on it, the farmer is not happy, and if we estimate too high, I, if I were a county committeeman, wouldn't be happy. It puts us between the horns of a dilemma. I don't know that there is a solution. If there is, a cost-share based on a percentage of actual cost would appear worth considering.

Perhaps the biggest and most difficult problem is the high mortality in permanent practices. In some instances  $\frac{2}{3}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of such practices have not been carried out during the year. If the mortality were reduced, we could use our resources more effectively. This problem has, of course, received a lot of attention and is pretty much an old story.

While I am well aware that community sign-up has its shortcomings, I do feel that I should mention that in Windsor County where this type of sign-up is used our men like it very much. They think that by working with committeemen at these meetings they save many farm visits and that it is time

which for them is very effectively spent. They also think that as a result of discussion and the information which often is available for the farm, that the requests for permanent type practices are on a firmer basis. There are other more important factors to be considered, of course, but as far as we in SCS are concerned, the community approach as it has been worked out in Windsor County is highly satisfactory.

I understand you have quite a few new community committeemen this year. Perhaps some of them are not too familiar with certain practices. Could we help in acquainting them with such practices and, if so, how? I presume possibilities would include help in training meetings, showing practices on the land, and informational material. Now that we are operating on a State basis and have a small State staff, we are in a somewhat better position to help with training than in the past.

I appreciate the opportunity of being here and talking with you. I just have the feeling that we are working together pretty well and that whatever problems exist or arise are those to be expected in any teamwork undertaking. If there is any one thought I would particularly like to leave, it's this: As problems do arise, let's take time to talk them over. It'll help make a good teamwork job an even better teamwork job.



SUGGESTIONS FROM OUR CO-WORKERS  
IN THE EXTENSION SERVICE

Address by R. P. Davison, Associate Director, of Extension  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 6, 1955

Nineteen years ago (1936) the Vermont Extension Service was very active in helping to establish the ACP in Vermont.

Director Carrigan was especially active in helping to get the first State Committee set up, and in getting the program under way at the State level.

At the county level county agents were likewise helping to arrange for the first county committees, and in getting the program under way at that level. They spent considerable time in counseling with Vermont farmers as to the new program and what it could do for them. They and the county farmers were working together to get the wheels moving and set the program up so that it would be successful in the years ahead.

The program was well founded, and has grown and leveled off to serve Vermont farmers effectively. Now we seem to be having a problem in connection with the use of lime by farmers in the State. Reports to me indicate that the use of lime has fallen off rather steadily over the last few years, and dropped about 8,000 tons from 1953 to 1954, as far as the ACP Program was concerned.

Yesterday morning Win Way gave some very good suggestions as to why use lime, the values of it, and perhaps some of the reasons that farmers were not using it. He is much interested in helping out on this program, I can assure you.

I would like to suggest that one effort we might all cooperate in this year would be a series of schools for community committeemen in each county. The purpose of these schools would be to train these men in the value of lime, its use, its proper application, etc. I would further suggest that these days be limited entirely to this subject, and that any paper work, filling out of forms, etc., be left for another day's schooling if at all possible.

We in the Extension Service will continue to cooperate wholeheartedly with the ACP committeemen and Administrative Officers in connection with (a) handling publicity through our State editorial office in the fields of radio, press, and television, (b) continue the College of Agriculture Advisory Committee. In this connection I would like to point out that the State ACP Committee set this advisory committee this year. I think this was a real step forward as it did two things -- first, it helped our people in the Extension Service at the State level and at the College of Agriculture to keep better informed relative to ACP practices, its philosophies, etc.; and secondly, it helped keep the ACP program in line with our technical recommendations from the College.

The Extension Service will continue its educational work in connection with various agronomic practices of interest in the ACP program. Another practice that I am particularly interested in is that of forestry. I believe that if we all work together in pointing out the value of forest plantings and forest management to the farmers we work with, that even though the practices may be slow over a period of years, real results will be forthcoming.

I have been glad of the opportunity to meet with you people here yesterday and today.

SUGGESTIONS FROM OUR CO-WORKERS  
IN THE FOREST SERVICE

Since Paul S. Newcomb of the U. S. Forest Service is new to Vermont, he stated that, rather than make a speech, he intended to become acquainted with the group and wanted to sit in, and listen and learn.

Perry Merrill, State Forester of the Vermont State Forest Service, spoke to the group briefly on current events in the State Forest Service. He commended the cooperation of the committee system and explained that his Service stood ready and willing to cooperate with them as in the past.





SUGGESTIONS FROM OUR CO-WORKERS  
IN THE FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION

Address by Cloyes T. Gleason, State Field Representative  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 6, 1955

The common objective of all the agencies represented here today is to help people do a better job of farming.

A better job is not just desirable, it is necessary. Everyone is aware of the fact that the price of a hundredweight of milk has fallen while costs have remained high. One of two things is happening to those farmers who cannot produce for less cost than formerly. On the one hand, producers go out of business and perhaps lose their farms. On the other hand, many farmers continue to produce, but are forced to a lower standard of living for themselves and their families.

There is no way to sidestep the trend toward greater efficiency; nor would it be desirable to try to do so. The census people tell us that at the turn of the century it took one person on a farm to feed five nonfarm people. By 1949 the ratio had fallen to 1 to 12. Then in 1953, only four years later, 1 person on a farm was able to feed 17 nonfarm people. This underlines the rapidity with which output per man is increasing.

What does a better job consist of, as far as Vermont farming is concerned? It involves, of course, all phases of farm management, and I would not attempt to outline them this morning. There is, however, one phase which the ASC program and FHA can work together on, and might do even more. This is the production of roughage--both quality and quantity. As many of you know, the Farmers Home Administration assists its borrowers in analyzing their plans and records at the end of each year. Now, the production of adequate roughage is only one part of a farmer's overall program, but it is perhaps the most important. We find that if we divide our borrowers into two categories--those who are able to make both ends meet, by and large, and those who are not--there is a close correlation between an adequate roughage program and getting along financially. This is something that our two programs might work more closely on.

For our part, our County Supervisors urge borrowers to participate in the ACP program when a loan is being written. The same applies in subsequent years when no loan is contemplated. Loan funds are made available for the ACP sign-up if it seems likely to be needed.

If I may make a suggestion, it is that the ASC program use the FHA program in order to get more conservation measures on Vermont farms. To do this, I believe that county and community committeemen should keep themselves informed on our loan programs--and then be able to explain them to the farmers who appear to need and qualify for FHA credit. This, of course, is not a new idea, and it is already in effect to some extent. I would recommend that it be extended.

Here, briefly, are some of the highlights of the Farmers Home Administration program as they apply to the ACP program:

1. Who is eligible for FHA loans? A farmer who is unable to get credit in the amount he needs, and for the length of time he needs--from other sources.

2. Operating loans--Based on a farm and home plan, made to help farmers put into effect needed adjustments. Loans may be made for any ACP practice.

3. Farm Ownership loans--for the purchase or development of land or buildings. This includes all ACP practices.

4. Soil and Water Conservation loans--This is a new type of loan. As the name implies, these loans are for conservation practices. They may be made for only one practice or several. These loans are not supervised. There is no limit on the size of the farm. This loan may be made more quickly than other types. Interest is  $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ . The term is from 1 to 20 years. In the case of an ACP loan, the security would be first lien on some item of equipment or if justified, a lien on equipment.

Now, here is an example of a conservation loan recently approved. The applicant has a herd of 27 milking cows. There are 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres of tillable land on his farm in a fairly high state of cultivation. He has depended on several pieces of land at some distance away. This source of hay has been undependable, and of low quality. He has about 30 acres of pasture on his farm which can be developed to produce high quality roughage. The ASC and SCS people have cooperated in working out a plan for the development of the land. It involves some clearing, a drainage ditch, a farm pond, and an entire job of establishing a stand of grass and clover. The total cash cost is to be about \$4000. This entire amount is in the loan. Repayments will be from ACP payments for two program years, and from monthly payments. If the amount to be repaid by monthly payment is \$3000, this would be \$20/month for 20 years.

In closing, I would like to say that we enjoy working with your organization, as well as with the others represented here--Extension, SCS, Forest Service. I hope that we can continue helping you in your program of assisting people to improve their farming and the standard of living.

SUGGESTIONS FROM OUR CO-MEMBERS  
IN THE SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Address by Willard Arms, President, SCD Supervisors  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 6, 1955

Thank you for the opportunity to bring greetings from the Soil Conservation District Supervisors.

The saying goes that a man cannot serve two masters. Yet I see committeemen here who are supervisors in the Soil Conservation Districts. We are serving two different organizations but working for one objective - soil and water conservation.

Experience has proven that the job is too big for one agency alone. We supervisors appreciate your important part in bringing public funds to the aid of the farmer. It would be impossible for most farmers to do so much toward conservation without some cost-sharing basis.

When I first heard of Soil Conservation I thought in terms of conserving for future generations. Later I discovered that the objectives of Soil Conservation Districts were to use every acre of land in the way to which it is best suited and to treat every acre so that it will produce most efficiently for the present generation as well as for those who are to come after us.

Soil Conservation is not only a system of well-fertilized fields, or of ditches, terraces and ponds - but rather a program which makes use of all conservation practices.

Up to this point I have tried to represent the District Supervisors - but from now on I am strictly on my own. You people have done such a good job and have been so cooperative with the districts that it seems almost like an insult to make any suggestions to you.

One of our major problems, I believe, is maintaining a proper balance between fertility maintenance and permanent type practices. Who knows which is best for each additional farm? More funds spent for permanent type practices mean less to use for fertilizer and lime. Fortunately the final decision rests with the farmer.

The following are some of the thoughts I have:

1. Do the SCS technicians tell all the farmers they contact the different kinds of assistance a farmer may receive from the ASC program? In the counties where the Purchase Order Plan is used, do the farmers realize the possibilities this Plan offers?
2. Could committeemen, when they call on farmers, check with them on their Conservation Farm Plan and make recommendations accordingly? If the farmer is not a cooperator in the District, why not suggest the advantages?



3. Have all the committeemen had enough instruction so that they can make sound and wise recommendations? Do they take it for granted that the farmer has read over his ASC Handbook describing practices?
4. Is there any report turned into the ASC office by the committeemen to show why some farmers do not avail themselves of the opportunity to go into the program?
5. Does everyone realize that through the Districts they have a means whereby they can cooperatively request aid from any agency or purchase new kinds of equipment that might improve our methods? Committeemen are always welcome to attend District meetings and the Supervisors are open to any suggestions.
6. Have the results of the Purchase Order Plan been encouraging? The Supervisors that I have talked with feel this has wonderful possibilities and hope that the plan will be given a fair trial.

We feel that it might take a long time for the farmers to catch on, but that it is something that will develop with the years. We think that this is one of the best things that has happened to help Districts..

In closing I wish to quote from the Creed of the Soil Conservationist:

"I believe that whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; that he who manages his fields, pastures, woodland and streams with respect and wisdom shall reap the bountiful harvest and so shall his descendants; while, he who uses them selfishly, thinking only of his own immediate gain, shall bring to grief his land, himself, and his childrens' children."



## CURRENT EVENTS IN C. S. S.

Address by Harris W. Soule, Director, Northeast Area, CSS  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 6, 1955

Mr. Chairman, Members of the State Committee and friends. It certainly is a pleasure for me to be able to meet again with committeemen and office staffs both State and county at a conference to discuss plans and problems in connection with administering the programs under your direction.

One of the most pleasant experiences of my life to date was the time which I spent in the former PMA Vermont State office. We might even go back and say the former Triple A and PMA offices in Vermont. We had our problems then but I am sure that they did not compare with the problems which you are faced with today. My contacts at that time and since have convinced me beyond any question of doubt that the personnel of the State and county offices and the county and community committees, and State committee in Vermont have done a fine job in accepting and performing their responsibilities.

During the past few months I have had an opportunity to meet with the State committee and State office staff in Vermont as well as other States. It has been a pleasure for me to come back to Vermont and I can say without any mental reservation that you can well be proud of the work which your State, and for that matter your county offices, are doing. I am quite sure that Vermont, at the moment, is the only State in the Union that has increased its participation in the 1955 Agricultural Conservation Program over what it was in 1954.

Well do I remember the early days of the ACP program. As you will remember the old Triple A was declared unconstitutional and in its place was passed the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938. This Act provided for the Committee system which we now have and I am of the opinion that this innovation in the administration of farm programs has done more to make them sound and effective than any other move that has been made in my memory.

At this time I wish to pay tribute to Dean Carrigan. As you all know Joe has always been interested in the welfare of farm people and has directed his efforts toward bettering their conditions. It was his foresight and wisdom that made it easy, back twenty years ago, to cope with the various problems we had in setting up the, then, rather new and, I might say, untried program. Many people were skeptical of the government spending money on their farms. You will remember it was said that if farmers entered into even unwritten contracts with the government it would not be long before a government agent would be telling them just what they would have to plant and how. Of course, in some States some people may say that that has come true, however, I am sure that it is not the case in Vermont. Coming back to Joe. He was one of the leaders in the Northeast in deciding policies and assisting in establishing the early ACP program. I again pay tribute to him and thank him from the bottom of my heart for the assistance and guidance which he has given me over the years.

We were very lucky, back in 1936, to have a well-respected and capable State Committee. I remember very distinctly that one of the first actions which they took was to establish a rotation system so that, as they put it at that time, new ideas and new faces could be brought into the administration of the program. Over the past years this principle has been adopted by a few of your neighbor States and then last year Secretary Benson established it throughout the country. It was not easy to change from a system where membership on the State Committee had become a vested interest. However, I am sure that the change as it has been made in every State in the Northeast Area has already convinced some of the skeptics that it is a wise move and will improve administration of the program under State committees. Not that the members who have served are not capable or have grown too old -- notice the youthful look on Mr. Wilson's face -- but the programs are changing and I am convinced that the rotation system is a factor that will keep the administration of the program, country wide, on a high level of efficiency.

In order that you may have a better idea of the background of the State Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation office and its relationship to the national office, I think that it would be well for me to briefly go over the organization chart of the Department of Agriculture and then you can see the relationship as well as hear me state it. You know the professors have determined that one remembers 10 percent of what they read, 20 percent of what they hear, 30 percent of what they see, and 50 percent of what they see and hear. And strange as it may seem, only 70 percent of what they say. I don't know how that applies to speakers but I imagine it is about that percentage. However, people remember 90 percent of what they say and do. You, of course, all know that one of the mottos of the 4-H Club members is "learn by doing," and I am sure that that was adopted because it has been found that when people do things as well as to say them they will learn faster and remember longer.

You will see from the chart that the Secretary's office is staffed by an Under Secretary, Mr. True D. Morse, an Assistant Secretary for Federal-States Relations, Mr. Ervin L. Peterson, an Assistant Secretary for Marketing and Foreign Agriculture, Mr. Earl L. Butz, and an Assistant Secretary for Agricultural Stabilization, Mr. James A. McConnell. I am sure many of you have heard Mr. McConnell's name in this country as he was formerly General Manager of the GLF in New York. Mr. McConnell, as you will see, is in charge of the activities in the Secretary's office in which category the Commodity Stabilization Service is most interested. It goes without saying that Mr. McConnell is one of the most respected and capable farm leaders in the country. He has earned an enviable reputation in the Department as well as in other Departments of the government. You will have an opportunity to hear Mr. McConnell at the Area Conference in Washington to be held May 17, 18 and 19. He will talk on market prices and price supports. You will note that CSS is headed by Mr. Earl H. Hughes, formerly of Illinois, as Administrator. Mr. Hughes was a large seed corn grower before he came to the Department as Assistant Administrator of CSS when Mr. McConnell was promoted to Assistant Secretary. He is a capable individual, a clear thinker, and acts aggressively. You will note

that CSS has three Deputy Administrators, Mr. H. L. (Larry) Hanwaring, whom many of you know well and I am sure admire as a capable operator and a good friend. Larry is in charge of adjustment production activities. Then there is another Deputy Administrator, Mr. Preston Richards, who has responsibility for Price Support programs and you will note on the chart the various commodity divisions reporting to Mr. Richards. Then the other Deputy Administrator is Mr. Frank R. McGregor, who has responsibility for administrative matters, Deputy Administrator for Operations.

You will note that the State and County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation offices are the responsibility of Larry Hanwaring. It is to his office that the Area Directors report and I can say with all sincerity that it is a privilege as well as a pleasure to work with Larry Hanwaring. You who knew him when he was fieldman for the old Northeast Regional office will remember that his sincerity and fairness were two of his strongest characteristics. You will note that the Agricultural Conservation Program Service is a separate and independent service within the Department but outside of CSS. However, by executive order of the Secretary the responsibility for administration of this program is vested in the State and County ASC Committees.

The Agricultural Act of 1954 directs the Secretary to administer certain provisions of that Act by the committee system.

Mr. Heald, in inviting me to speak on the program asked me to cover current events in CSS. I am going to separate my remarks into two main divisions because our office, that is the office of the Area Director, has two main responsibilities:

1. To assist State and County offices with a better understanding of programs and an effective administration, and
2. To keep close contact with States in order to advise the Deputy Administrator for Production Adjustment and, through him the Administrator, of agricultural conditions and problems within the State and (2) the progress and problems encountered in administering the various programs and (3) the operation of State and county offices.

Our first responsibility is carried out by visits to the 13 States in the Northeast Area, from Maine to Virginia and West Virginia, and at those visits to meet with State Committees and the State Office personnel. I find it very helpful to, when possible, attend county committee meetings as well because they are confronted with these problems first and I am sure that you get a better understanding of the battle from a visit to the front-line trench.

One of our responsibilities is to go over budgets with the various State committees and State office to get the estimates of the administrative funds necessary to carry out their operation and to discuss these with the Budget Division of Commodity Stabilization Service. In drawing



up the budget and discussing it with the State Committee and State office staff it gives us an opportunity to point out the weak spots, if there are any, and make suggestions where we think the operations may be improved. Not always can we arrive at a budget which is satisfactory to all concerned but I am sure that there is not too much disagreement.

Another responsibility is to assist State offices in the selection, supervision and development of their personnel. Ofttimes the selection and supervision is well taken care of by the Administrative Officers, as it should be. In the next few months, and I hope, years, because I believe it is important, we are going to hear more of personnel development programs. To some who have taken training programs, as they used to be called, they will recognize this project as the same effort which is being carried out successfully in many industries and businesses and the same effort which the Department undertook a few years ago under a different name. Some of you here remember the job improvement method training course which we had in Vermont. Some who took the course, I am sure, profited and made use of the things they learned. Others didn't see much in it. Of course that is true in all efforts. However, from the President through the various Cabinet offices we have seen a renewed interest in giving present personnel as well as new employees an opportunity to develop their abilities in order that they may do a more effective job. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to take such a course and I urge everyone to avail themselves of the opportunity. At the moment we are working on a course of personnel development for county office managers. Some may wonder why we start with County Office Managers. Well, I think it is because they are closest to the problems and are the first contact with the farmers. Some will say the community committeemen should make this contact and I agree but I am thinking of the county office as a unit including both county and community committeemen as well as office managers. The office manager, under the direction of the county committee, is to a high degree responsible for the operation of the program in the county. This personnel development work will give the county office managers an opportunity to analyze each individual activity to break it down into the various steps and to determine those things involved with each step in order that they may be performed capably and on time. All of this, of course, is dedicated to providing a better service to farmers, who after all are our clients.

Along with personnel and budget, of course, we work with the various States to obtain sufficient office space and this sometimes is not possible to do as good a job as we would like because of physical limitations. The other day I was talking with our friend Senator George Aiken, and from what he said I understand that General Services Administration is looking into the possibility of a new Federal building in Burlington so that possibly your office may look forward to new quarters in this Federal building.

Another activity, of course, which our office engages in is the assistance in administration of various programs. We have responsibility to work with States on the production and adjustment programs and right now one of the things we are being asked to do is advise States on the



flexibility feature which the 1954 Agricultural Act introduced into the price support programs. I will not take the time now to go into the merits or demerits of the flexible price supports versus the rigid price supports. Suffice it to say, however, that every control program which we are trying to operate in order to support prices is in trouble at the moment. This goes for the tobacco and cotton programs which in the past have been pointed to as the ideal control program. At the present time excessive supplies of both commodities are making it almost impossible for farmers to live up to the average allotments which have been drastically decreased. There is some question as to whether or not the tobacco farmers will vote the necessary marketing quotas when they receive the cuts in allotments which are forthcoming.

Another program activity of State and county offices, of course, is the Agricultural Conservation Program which is the program in Vermont. We work with State offices in analyzing the administration of the program and especially in the operation of the committee system in its administration. One current problem in connection with the administration of the Agricultural Conservation Program is the initial application concept. I am sure that you people are familiar with this provision and are well aware of its implication. One person said recently that it will take only a few years for a farmer to work himself out of the agricultural conservation program. I am sure that this is not entirely true for the simple reason that the program changes from year to year and I know that there are many farms which have enough problems so that it would take several years to complete all of the conservation practices which the farm needs. It is true that he would, within a few years, complete the seeding of his farm, for instance, and therefore would be ineligible for this initial application policy for future payments for seeding. Of course, some people feel that once the government has assisted the farmer in putting his farm in condition that he should maintain it. Whether or not farmers will maintain the fertility of their farms and protect them against destructive soil erosion remains to be seen. They will point out that prior to the ACP, farmers did not carry out the Soil Conservation program which for years they had been told by the County Agents was needed. However, I believe that we have a new factor in the picture and that is that during the last few years we have seen young farmers enter the program and have been more or less brought up with it. They have not only had conservation farming as an ideal but have practiced it in their every day farm operations. Of course the matter of farm income is a very definite factor in the enrollment and participation in the Agricultural Conservation Program. Before the program started, the County Agent and others had worked with farmers for years urging them to adopt certain conservation or improved practices and considerable progress was made. However, when the government held out an incentive to the farmers by paying a portion of the cost, the adoption of these improved practices was multiplied many times. What the future will hold if the farmer is made ineligible for cost-sharing because of this initial application concept, no one, at least I do not know.

The operation of the committee system is very much in the picture these days. There are several bills before Congress which if passed will affect the operation of the committees. Last fall the Secretary of Agriculture issued instructions concerning the eligibility of county and community committeemen. Those instructions stated that committeemen who had served all or any part of the previous three years were ineligible to serve. This instruction was, however, later withdrawn because of an amendment to the Agricultural Act of 1954 which prohibited the Secretary from limiting the tenure of office of county committeemen. However, the restriction did apply to community committeemen inasmuch as they were not specifically mentioned in the legislation. There immediately arose a dispute as to whether or not it was the intent of Congress to include all committeemen in a county rather than just county committeemen. It was finally decided by the Secretary not to remove the restrictions on community committeemen. The purpose of the restrictions was to institute a system of rotation for community committeemen. I do not know the outcome of the present legislation but I do know that there are people within the Department who feel strongly that there should be no restrictions on the tenure of community committeemen, but that the county committeemen might well be elected for a three-year term on a staggered basis which would institute a rotation system for county committeemen. However, as I said before, this matter is before Congress so that possibly we should not spend any time speculating as to what the outcome will be.

One of the immediate problems in several States in the Northeast Area concerning the administration of the Agricultural Conservation Program is the provision carried in the Agricultural Act of 1954 which made it compulsory for a farmer to comply with acreage allotment in order to be eligible for cost-sharing under the Agricultural Conservation Program. This provision does not affect the Vermont program but is a problem in States which have acreage allotments. This legislation is still on the books and has had a detrimental effect on the enrollment in the 1955 program. Bills have been introduced, however, to amend the Agricultural Act of 1954 removing this provision. One has passed the House but is pending in the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry in the Senate. There again the outcome of this legislation is problematical and I do not believe anyone knows the outcome at this moment. Several people have speculated, however, that the House action will prevail in the Senate and that this compliance with acreage allotments in order to receive cost-sharing under the Agricultural Conservation Program will be stricken from the Act.

As I said before, one of the responsibilities of the Office of the Area Director is to advise the Administrator through the Deputy Administrator for Production Adjustment of the farm conditions and problems in the State, the progress and problems of administering programs in the various States, as well as the operation of State and county offices. This function is important because oftentimes those who are in a position of making decisions must depend upon information from the field in order that those decisions may be based on the best possible information.

As an example of this operation, last fall it was brought to my attention that the travel regulations which had been adopted by CSS for governing State offices was working to the distinct disadvantage of members of State Committees and State office personnel. In several States where I visited I was told that they did not consider it just, and asked for reconsideration. I brought this to the attention of Larry Manwaring and he advised me that it would be discussed at the next staff meeting. We did discuss this matter and I had the feeling before the meeting that no change would be made inasmuch as the Northeast Area was the one most particularly affected. However, we discussed it pro and con and it was finally decided that we had better leave the restrictions as they were. I did not believe that those States which were not affected by the restrictions should vote against change and in conversations with some of the Area Directors of the other Areas I made this point. After talking with them, they could see the effect on our Area and they understood the problem better and were nearer in accord with our position. At the next monthly staff meeting the matter was taken up again and finally it was decided that the restrictions were an unjust burden on some people and should be removed. It was also agreed that the Standard Travel Regulations for government employees would be in effect for all States which did not add further restrictions. I might say that several States felt that conditions warranted an additional restriction and for those States these restrictions were approved.

I am sure that all of you will realize the importance of reflecting conditions in the various States when a program decision is being considered or a policy affecting the administration of a program is being considered. I could bring other examples to your attention but I am sure that you will understand the operation with the example cited.

Let me say again it has been a pleasure to meet with your State Committee and State Office personnel from time to time. They are doing a good job administering the ACP. I wish to thank you for the invitation to attend this conference and be able to renew old acquaintances.





ASC STATE CONFERENCE  
Burlington, Vermont  
April 5-6, 1955

Program Planning Recommendations - 1956 Agricultural Conservation Program

The committee on program planning submits the following recommendations for the consideration of the full conference. For convenience, these recommendations are listed as nearly as possible in the order in which they were taken up at the county meetings.

Background Statement

These recommendations took into consideration the National goals as outlined by the Washington Staff of the Agricultural Conservation Program Service and are based upon the desires of our Vermont people as expressed in a series of county meetings which were held in every Vermont county. These meetings were attended by community committeemen, county committeemen and technical people at the county level. The delegates at this conference had before them the county recommendations and the technical group recommendations and gave full consideration to the respective recommendations.

Importance of Minerals to Conservation

We believe here in Vermont that minerals have a very definite place in our Agricultural Conservation Program. We submit that, through the use of minerals, we have built up a good sod and can continue to keep a good sod. We further submit that, in order to get minerals used in our State to the extent needed, we need some kind of a cost-sharing program similar to the Agricultural Conservation Program. We agree that certain restrictions and refinements should be placed on the use of minerals in the State and that we should move towards the goal of having the farmer pay a continually larger share of the cost. It is pointed out that we have already invested quite a lot of public funds in the use of minerals under our program and it would therefore seem a wise move to protect that investment by authorizing continued use of these minerals.

The Agricultural Conservation Program is more than an aid to agriculture. It is and should be a program for the National conservation of all of our resources. To this end, the city folks and the farm folks must work together to build up soil fertility and keep soil fertility reserve on hand when needed.

We believe very definitely that liming is a must for the practices in Vermont.

We believe that the use of superphosphate with manure is one of our most important practices. By using super and manure, you conserve nitrogen, you get the farmer to make better use of the manure and you get a balanced fertilizer.

In addition to this, the mixed fertilizer practice is a must in our scheme of farming. By the using of lime, super and mixed fertilizer, we are convinced that you can establish better sod in our grassland form of farming and thereby prevent the work of additional permanent type practices at a later date. In other words, the expenditure of funds now to use minerals to keep the land in good condition means we won't have to patch it up later on.

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## Program Policies

We thoroughly agree that it is necessary in a program of this type to have program principles and that it is important that they be listed in the practice handbook. We believe, however, that these program principles in order to be carried out and to be sound must come from the field and be supported by the field. It is not possible or desirable to have them set at the Washington level and sent out to the field.

In connection with the seven principles outlined last year, we have the following recommendations:

We agree that principles 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 are satisfactory as listed in the 1955 practice handbook.

In connection with principle number 4, we recommend the omission of the second sentence which reads: "Generally practices that have become a part of regular farming operations in a particular county should not be eligible for cost-sharing." We believe that the first sentence adequately takes care of this problem. In other words, after we have decided what practices are needed in our State, we must make them available to all participating. We should try through persuasion to get the farmer to carry out additional conservation.

We are not in accord with principle number 7 on the initial application concept. We agree that the farmer should assume responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of practices such as ditching, ponds, woodland improvement and similar ones which have a high cost of initial installation. We believe, however, that it is right and in the public interest to assist in the use of minerals to the extent needed on a particular farm. We have taken and will continue to take additional steps to make sure that these minerals go only where needed and to the extent needed and we will continue to make sure that the farmer pays as much of the cost as he can to get the necessary job done.

We believe that we should continue to place emphasis on enduring-type practices as we did in the 1955 program.

In general, it is agreed that a 50-50 sharing of the cost is satisfactory. However, it may be necessary to increase cost-shares on some long-time hard-to-get-done practices. We believe that the package concept is sound to the extent utilized in our State under the 1955 program.

## Practice Recommendations

We have the following recommendations in connection with specific practices. References in connection with these practices will be to the practices offered in our State in 1955 unless otherwise specified.

### Practice No. 1 - Lime

We believe that the practice offered in 1955 should be continued with the reference to initial treatment removed. We agree that the soil test requirements should be continued as in 1955.





Practice No. 2 - Mixed Fertilizer for New Seeding

This practice should be continued as in 1955 with reference to initial treatment removed. The majority agreed that lime where needed should be required in connection with this practice.

Practice No. 3 - Mixed Fertilizer for Permanent Pastures

This practice should be continued without the restrictions as contained in 1955. In other words, we do not want the practice restricted as to the type of pasture on which the fertilizer can be used.

It is agreed that lime should be required in connection with this practice where it is needed.

Practice No. 6 - Improving Woodland

It is agreed that this practice should be continued as in 1955 omitting reference to initial treatment.

Practice No. 12 - Diversion Ditches

It is recommended that this practice be continued as in 1955 but that the cost-share rate be changed to read "50% of the cost."

Practice No. 15 - Open Drainage

It is agreed that this practice be continued as in 1955 with the cost-share rate changed to read "50% of the cost."

The group agreed that practices 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 19(a) and 20 should be offered as in 1955.

Additional Practices

The group recommends that a practice for topdressing hayland, pastureland and orchardland be provided for in the 1956 program similar to the one offered in Vermont in 1953. That is, this would be a practice which would provide payment for phosphorus and potash used in combination on the specified areas.

The group considered the several additional practices which were recommended by the various counties. Since there was only one county recommending each of these practices, it appeared that the most practical solution to this was to allow each county to write up their desires under the special practice provision contained in the State handbook.

Conservation Materials and Services

The group agreed that we should continue to furnish conservation materials and services under contract in 1956 as we did in 1955.



The individual types of conservation materials and services to be furnished within a county should be left up to the determination of that county; also the type of lime that they would like to have and whether or not they would like to have 80-lb. or 100-lb. bags.

The group recommended that, when the State Committee sent out bids, they include a request to the lime companies to bid on lime at the plants.

The group agreed that the extent of the use of purchase orders should be left up to the individual county.

In connection with cash collections, the following recommendations were made:

For lime, the farmer should pay 40% of the cost and the Government 60% of the cost.

For superphosphate, the farmer should pay 50% of the cost and the Government 50% of the cost.

For mixed fertilizer, the farmer should pay 50% of the cost and the Government should pay 50% of the cost.

In connection with the soil sampling service, it was agreed that each county should be permitted to determine the best way to furnish soil sampling services or soil testing services.

Respectfully submitted,

*James W. Williams*  
James W. Williams  
For the Program Planning Committee

James Williams, Chairman  
Edson Gifford, Vice Chairman  
A. F. Heald, Secretary

Other members of the Program Planning Committee

Robert Highter, Addison County  
John Stephenson, Addison County  
Clyde Bryant, Bennington County  
Donald Larocque, Caledonia County  
Ray Collins, Chittenden County  
Robert Carlson, Chittenden County  
Ray French, Essex County  
Stuart Newton, Franklin County  
George Caswell, Grand Isle County  
Ray Perkins, Lamoille County  
Ernest Johnson, Orleans County  
James Brayton, Rutland County  
Everett Walbridge, Washington County  
Myron Allen, Windham County  
Ray Pestle, Windham County  
Lloyd Jewett, Windsor County





Others contributing to the discussion included:

Ernest Gambell, Field Representative, ACPS  
Marshall Dunham, Franklin County Committee Alumnus  
Thomas F. Macauley, State Committee Alumnus  
L. Earl Wilson, State Committee Alumnus  
Eldon Corbett, New Hampshire State Committeeman  
George Ramsay, Essex County Committee Alumnus  
Irene Abell, Vermont State Office

Note: This report is based on the conference committee recommendations and was adopted without change by the general conference.



ASC STATE CONFERENCE  
Burlington, Vermont  
April 5-6, 1955

Report of Agricultural Conservation Program  
Operations Committee

The committee discussed various phases and problems concerning the operation of the ACP. We present to the conference as a whole for its consideration and adoption the following recommendations:

Section A -- Sign-up

1. Method of Enrollment

That it be left optional with the county committee.

2. Breakdown of Program Funds to the Farm

That the amount of assistance approved for a farm should be based on guides for super and mixed fertilizer practices, and needs for lime and the other practices. We further recommend approval for a guaranteed minimum assistance and a maximum assistance, dependent on funds available for each practice approved.

3. Policy on Cash Collections

That it be left optional with the county committee.

4. Instructions for County Committee, Office Managers and Community Committeemen

That instructions be simplified.

Section B -- Performance

1. Method of Reporting Performance

That community committeemen check on performance at the time of sign-up, and any needed follow-up be done by the county office at the end of the program year.

2. Requirements for Evidence

That present requirements are adequate.

3. Keeping Records of Practices Carried Out

That an inventory be kept based on a system of diminishing acres.

4. Instructions for County Committee, Office Managers and Community Committeemen.

That instructions be simplified, if possible.

## Section C -- Applications for Payment

### 1. Earlier Payments

That the method for making  
earlier payments be left to the county committee.

### 2. Small Payment Increase

That the small payment increase provision be continued.

## Section D -- Suggested Topics

### 1. We recommend the following changes in program operations in order to increase participation:

a. That there be fewer and simpler forms. We recommend the simplified form as designed by the State Office, whereby the request, approval, report of performance, and application for payment would be covered by one form.

b. Fewer restrictions on the use of materials, including the elimination of the "Initial Application" principle.

c. More field, demonstrational, and educational training for county and community committeemen.

d. That rotation of community committeemen be abolished.

### 2. We recommend training meetings conducted by Extension personnel in soil testing and good usage of lime and fertilizer.

## Members of Committee

Sedgewick Preston

E. W. Mattison

John DeVit,

John Page

Addison

Bennington

Arthur Messier

Clarence Burrington

Caledonia

Raymond Rowley

Elden Hartshorn

Floyd Weld

Alan Kinney

Lawrence Gregory

Dorothy Howard

Earle Clark

Avis Bronson

Hazel Hoyt

Silas Jewett

Chittenden

Essex

Franklin

Grand Isle

Lamoille

Walter Wheatley

Eldon Lucier

Charles Winslow

D. Drew Bisbee

Robert Gaines

Ruel Abbott

Patricia Walsh

Marjorie Leith

Betty Dutton

Orange

Orleans

Rutland

Washington

Windham

Windsor



Visitors

Ernest Gambell  
Don Davis  
L. Earl Wilson  
Marcia Tudhope

Field Representative, ACPS  
Fieldman, ASC, New Hampshire  
State ASC Committee Alumnus  
Vermont State Office

*B. Frank Myott g*

B. Frank Myott, Chairman  
Charles Winslow, Vice Chairman  
C. B. Doane, Secretary

Note: This report is based on conference committee recommendations and includes the changes as adopted by the general conference.



ASC STATE CONFERENCE  
Burlington, Vermont  
April 5-6, 1955

Report of the Administrative Problems and  
Related Activities Committee

The committee wishes to make the following recommendations for consideration of the conference in regard to administrative problems and related activities of the ASC Program at the county level.

1. County Elections

In connection with the holding of county elections, the committee recommended that it be left up to each county as to whether meetings be held in each community or by mail.

The committee recommended the continuation of county and community election boards and that these boards be representative of agriculture. The committee also recommended that there be close cooperation between the ASC committeemen and election boards.

2. Supervision By County Committee of:

Office Personnel

It was generally agreed that:

- a. Agendas be prepared for county committee meetings.
- b. Instructions for the preparation of forms by county office managers be carefully adhered to.
- c. A calendar of work be set up.
- d. Where office assistants are working on a full-time basis, they be properly trained by the county office manager.
- e. A one-day training conference of county office managers be held sometime before the training school.

The matter of showing check numbers and date of payment on time sheets and invoices was discussed. No recommendation was made in this connection.

Community Committeemen

Because of the large number of new community committeemen, it was recognized that there was a greater need for supervision of these people in the field. It would be the responsibility of the community committeemen to see that all farmers in a community are contacted. It was recommended that community committeemen keep in close contact with the county office manager in order that their work may be frequently checked.

a. Pay Scale for Community Committeemen

The pay scale for community committeemen in neighboring states was presented. This committee recommended that for Vermont community committeemen, the pay rate should be \$10 a day.

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The following information was obtained from a confidential source who has provided reliable information in the past.

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### Consignees

Because of the large number of new community committeemen and consignees, the committee recognizes the necessity of close supervision and recommends that the county committee so supervise them that the following functions may be properly carried out:

- a. Consignment is accurately accounted for.
- b. Bills of Lading and Temporary Receipts are properly used.
- c. Forms are accurately filled in.
- d. Proper samples and weights be taken when requested.
- e. Entry for weights should be recorded to the nearest tenth.
- f. Shortages are reported promptly.

### 3. County Committee Meetings

The committee recommended that:

- a. County committees hold regular monthly meetings on a fixed date.
- b. An agenda be used at each meeting.
- c. Accurate and complete minutes be kept.
- d. Two copies of minutes be forwarded promptly to the State Office.
- e. Community committeemen be invited to county committee meetings as administrative funds permit.

### 4. County Training Meetings

The committee recommended that a state-wide meeting such as was held last year prior to training schools should be continued again this year, and that the agenda be confined strictly to ACP problems.

The committee recommended that county committees, at their discretion, adopt one or more of the following methods for training community committeemen:

- a. A day be devoted by the county committee, county office manager, county agents, county forester, SCS technicians, and State Office representatives, in reviewing instructions and forms.
- b. Following this, a training meeting for community committeemen.
- c. Where advisable, county committees may give further training in the field to community committeemen needing such additional training.

### 5. County Handbooks

In order to make handbooks more effective, it was recommended that they should be of handy size and be simply worded. It was left optional with the county committees and county office managers to decide whether the handbooks would be printed. The committee recommended that the handbooks be delivered to the farmer at time of sign-up rather than being sent out by mail.

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## 6. Prior Approval Work

A discussion of this phase of the work resulted in the recommendation that the present system was satisfactory and should be continued.

## 7. Public Relations

### a. News Releases, Radio, Visual Aids, Reference Cards

The committee recommended continuation of the present method of handling news releases, radio work and publications. They also recommended the continued use of visual aids, especially slides of pictures taken within the county. Reference cards furnished to counties from the State Office were found to be very useful at meetings. The committee recommended that more of this form of information be made available to county committees.

### b. Publications

The committee recommended that practice handbooks should be made available to all farmers and that soliciting and rates of ads be decided by the county committee.

### c. Meetings with Other Organizations

The committee recommended that county committees continue to work with other organizations, especially Extension Service, SCS, and FS. They also recommended inviting to county committee meetings representatives of all agencies concerned with problems that county committees have at a particular time.

### d. County News Letters

The committee recommended that news letters be prepared as frequently as possible.

### e. County Tours

The committee recommended that the continuance of county tours be left optional with counties and that counties having tours should work with county agents in the organization of such tours.

### f. Farmer-Businessman Dinners

The committee recommended that farmer-businessman dinners be continued, insofar as possible.

## 8. Other Programs

### a. Price Support

The committee recommended that the State Office should continue to furnish information on price support and other programs, and that this information be as simple and direct as possible so that counties can use it in news releases and news letters to keep committeemen and farmers informed on this subject.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of the proposed changes on the system.

2. Objectives

2.1. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to determine the impact of the proposed changes on the system's performance, to identify the areas that require improvement, and to provide recommendations for the implementation of the changes.

2.2. Scope of the study

The scope of the study is limited to the system's performance and the areas that require improvement. It does not cover the implementation of the changes.

2.3. Methodology

The methodology used in this study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative methods include interviews with the system's users and experts, and the quantitative methods include the analysis of the system's performance data.

2.4. Results

The results of the study show that the proposed changes have a positive impact on the system's performance, and that the areas that require improvement are identified.

2.5. Conclusion

The conclusion of the study is that the proposed changes are feasible and that the areas that require improvement are identified. The recommendations for the implementation of the changes are provided.

2.6. Recommendations

The recommendations for the implementation of the changes are provided. They include the need for a thorough testing of the changes and the need for a training program for the system's users.

2.7. References

2.8. Appendix

The appendix contains the data used in the study, including the system's performance data and the results of the interviews. It also contains the recommendations for the implementation of the changes.



b. Wool Program

The committee recommended that news releases be sent out to local papers and committeemen, and that community committeemen be kept informed by news releases, circular letters and radio.

Members of Committee

Howard Foster  
Ball L. Lyons  
Norman Lowe

J. W. Kingsbury  
C. E. Wright  
Reginald Nichols  
Jay Haylett  
Arthur Stancliff  
Glenn Webster

Robert Kilborn  
Roy Burroughs  
W. J. Bisson  
Claude Bensenhaver  
Matthew Watson

Edla Browne

Mildred Murphy  
Philip Grime

Mildred Bell

Grace Blackwell

Louise Rand  
Gordon Farr

Bethany French  
Gordon Butler  
Mae Carpenter

Addison  
Bennington  
Caledonia

Chittenden  
Essex  
Franklin  
Grand Isle  
Lamoille  
Orange

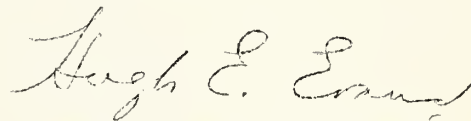
Orleans  
Rutland  
Washington  
Windham  
Windsor

Visitors

H. W. Soule  
Merrill W. Walker  
Wayne Fuller  
Philip F. Dean

Madelene Bevins  
Bertha Saunders

Area Director (NE), CSS  
Vermont State Employment Service  
Former Chairman Addison County Committee  
Administrative Officer, Connecticut State  
ASC Office  
Vermont State Office  
Vermont State Office



Hugh E. Evans, Chairman  
Norman Lowe, Vice Chairman  
Edward N. Blondin, Secretary

Note: This report is based on the conference committee recommendations and was adopted without change by the general conference.

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## CLOSING REMARKS

By A. F. Heald, State Administrative Officer  
at Vermont Annual ASC Conference  
Burlington, Vermont, April 6, 1955

I am glad of this opportunity of reviewing your 1955 Vermont ASC Conference highlights with you. I want you to know that I am proud to be associated with this group. I am proud of the way the county committeemen, county office managers and county agents have pitched in these two days with sincerity to help us accomplish our goal.

### Some Announcements

I have a few announcements which I would like to make before my brief remarks of summary.

Progress of Applications for Payment -- A review at the State Office as of April 4 indicates that counties must take immediate steps to complete their applications for payment work. Our figures show that, out of an estimated 2723 applications to be processed, only 1647 have been received in the State Office. One county has completed the job, whereas one of the other counties has not sent in any applications to date. All of you should look this over and get your applications in at once.

1956 Program Funds -- I am happy to announce that the House of Representatives passed on <sup>ending</sup> March 28 the Department's agricultural appropriation bill for the year/June 30, 1956. Included in this bill is an authorization of \$250,000,000 for the 1956 ACP. This amount exceeds the budget request. The House did not include language to eliminate funds for small payment increases in 1956. This appropriation bill now goes to the Senate.

### Closing Remarks

It seems to me that a conference of this type is only the beginning. We have met here, discussed many things and made some plans, but the real test will come as to exactly what we do with the plans we have made. It is important, as the Assistant Secretary said, to do some dreaming, also to do some thinking, but the real test comes in the doing. We must be dreamers and thinkers, but above all we must be doers.

Our conference has demonstrated many things, such as:

1. State Committeemen can and will do a good job at a State conference. They are able to get up on their feet and express themselves.
2. County committeemen say what they think and are willing and able to contribute at meetings of this type. The same thing holds true for office managers and county agents.
3. Earl Wilson makes a good toastmaster. We knew he would and we had proof of it at our conference.

4. Our State and county committeemen who have served before and who are now the group that make up the alumni are still interested in our program. This was illustrated by the grand group of alumni that was present during our conference and especially at our conference banquet.
5. We have people in Washington who are capable and are interested in getting things done. Ernest Gambell did a nice job in explaining the ACP program. We want him to know that we appreciate it. We want him to know that we are not afraid to say what we think and that we intend to work toward a strong National program.
6. The Assistant Secretary illustrated to us that he is a man of many capabilities and will do the best he can to carry out his convictions.
7. Harris Soule - It is nice to have him back with us. He will be an important link between the State and the Washington Offices. He understands our needs and will fight for them.

### Resolutions

Now from this conference, I have made some resolutions. I hope that you will make some, too. I have, for example:

Resolved to follow through on this lime program - to take the information that Win Way and Bob Davison gave us and make sure that we do everything we can to get more lime used.

Resolved to try to understand the National policies and goals and to help blend our program with the National.

Resolved to try to understand the Selective Service set-up a little better. To get current information from Merton Ashton and others and make sure that counties do their part and see that it is passed on to the field.

Resolved to continue to work closely with farm labor groups. Let's help Merrill Walker with his job and he will help us.

Resolved to once again review our relationship with other agricultural agencies and to take the suggestions that were given to us at this State conference, analyze them and make sure that we do everything we can to work with these people and make use of their suggestions.

Resolved to study our system of holding a State Conference once again and make plans for a better one next year.

In conclusion - I want to thank you people for making this year's conference a great success. Remember the value will come from what we do from now on in. Sure, we'll do some dreaming and some thinking, but above all, let's do some doing. Thank you.



## OTHER CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

### State Committee Nominees

It has been a State policy for several years to ask the conference to vote for three county committeemen as nominees for the next vacancy on the State Committee. The following men were nominated. Their names are listed alphabetically and do not indicate the highest or lowest number of votes:

Clyde Bryant, Bennington County  
Edson Gifford, Orange County  
Charles Winslow, Rutland County

### Conference Banquet

Our guest speaker this year was Earl L. Butz, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. He brought us an inspiring message from the Department. We were glad that Senator George D. Aiken and Governor Johnson could be with us. Each of these men spoke briefly on the importance of the program to Vermont.

Others at the head table included:

H. W. Soule, Area Director (NE), CSS, and Mrs. Soule  
Mrs. Joseph B. Johnson  
Elmer Towne, Commissioner of Agriculture, and Mrs. Towne  
J. E. Carrigan, Dean, College of Agriculture, and Mrs. Carrigan  
Harold Arthur, Master, State Grange  
Keith Wallace, President, Vermont State Farm Bureau  
L. Earl Wilson, State Committee Alumnus, and Mrs. Wilson  
Hugh E. Evans, Chairman, State Committee, and Mrs. Evans  
James W. Williams, State Committeeman, and Mrs. Williams  
B. Frank Myott, State Committeeman, and Mrs. Myott

Mr. L. Earl Wilson, formerly State Committee Chairman, was our genial toastmaster for the banquet.

Entertainment included accordion solos by Dick Mercure and some fine whistling by Earl Bartlett, a farmer from Underhill.

There were 143 in attendance at this banquet. This sets a record for attendance in recent years.

### State and County Committee Alumni

At the banquet special tables were reserved for State and county committee alumni. The following State Committee alumni were present with their wives:

Thomas F. Macauley, Shoreham  
Ray R. Allen, South Hero  
Arthur H. Packard, Jericho  
L. Earl Wilson, Craftsbury

County committee alumni who had previously served ten or more years and who are not now serving were present as guests of their respective county committeemen. Each of these men was awarded a Certificate of Recognition for this contribution to conservation. The following were present:

Karl Field and Mrs. Field	Addison County
Wayne Fuller and Mrs. Fuller	Addison County
Gay Baldwin and Mrs. Baldwin	Chittenden County
George Ramsay	Essex County
Marshall Dunham and Mrs. Dunham	Franklin County
Lawrence Gregory	Lamoille County
Charles Ormsbee and Mrs. Ormsbee	Washington County
Merton Hott and daughter	Windsor County

Other county committee alumni who had served ten or more years and are not now serving and who could not attend this year's conference were:

Thurston Hulet	Bennington County
Chester Caswell	Grand Isle County
Leroy Kellas	Grand Isle County
Henry Menard	Orange County
Verne Davis	Windsor County

Special recognition was also given to those county committeemen with ten or more years of service who are still serving on the county committee or are now or have been State Committeemen. This group included:

Thomas F. Macauley	18 years	Ray R. Allen	14 years
Clyde H. Bryant	18 years	Howard Kittell	11 years
Ball L. Lyons	14 years	Edson Gifford	20 years
Edward K. Wright	12 years	Leon Brainerd	17 years
James W. Williams	18 years	W. J. Bisson	10 years
Park H. Newton	15 years	Claude Bensenhaver	12 years

#### Office Manager Honored

Miss Marjorie Leith, Office Manager in Washington County, was awarded a certificate for ten years of service.

#### Area Director Present

We were glad to have Harris Soule, who formerly guided the program in Vermont, with us as our new Area Director.

#### Visitors from Other States

We were glad that representatives from other State ASC groups could be with us. These included:

Donald Davis, Fieldman, from New Hampshire  
Eldon Corbett, State Committee Chairman, from New Hampshire  
Philip Dean, State Administrative Officer, from Connecticut

Exhibits

An exhibit of charts and pictures concerning the Agricultural Conservation Program in Vermont attracted considerable attention.

Photography

Our conference records are enriched by the good photography by William Stone, County Agent of Windsor County.

Final Motion

At the close of the conference, upon motion by Claude Bensenhaver, Windham County Committeeman, the committeemen present voted appreciation of this as one of the outstanding annual State conferences in the history of the program.

